

From Heidegger to Dugin and Back

Marlene Laruelle, ed.

With contributions by Emmanuel Faye, Michail
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Heidegger (behind "x") as Rector of the University of Freiburg, among other university rectors, at a NSDAP election rally on 11 November 1933 in Leipzig. Photo: Historia

"...At the very least, Heidegger is the greatest contemporary thinker...."

Alexander Dugin, *Martin Heidegger: The Philosophy of Another Beginning* (Washington Summit Publishers, 2014), p. 17.

Cover design by John Chrobak

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Introduction: What Reading Heidegger Tells Us about the Transformations of the Far Right

Marlene Laruelle

Heidegger and his followers claimed to have revolutionized philosophy in the second half of the 20th century. But his legacy has been gradually challenged as further research has demonstrated how much his philosophy cannot be dissociated from his political engagement in support of Nazism. The publication beginning in 2014 (and still ongoing at the time this writing) of Heidegger's *Black Notebooks*, written between 1931 and 1970, has been the latest evidence of the intimate relationship between Heideggerian philosophy and Nazi ideology.

For a long time, the philosopher inspired far-right thinkers the world over, from Europe to Russia and even Iran. Heidegger's concept of *Dasein* posits national identity in a specifically primitivist racial-cultural Volkishness. In the context of Heidegger's writings after Hitler took power, it is clear that his pre-1933 definition of *Dasein* fit neatly into the ideology of the emerging Nazi state and particularly that of the primitivist ideology of the Sturmabteilung (SA), and the later *Ahnenerbe*. The incorporation of his ideas offers an easy cachet to far-right ideologies in search of a source of philosophical legitimacy.

The concept of *Dasein* can indeed be read as a straightforward legitimation of a Volkish ontology: it calls for rootedness and nativity, arguing that every worldview is justified through its being anchored by a local identity, thereby destroying any idea of universalism. Heidegger's language of the "end of philosophy" also fits an eschatological vision of the end of the Western world, a requiem for a dying world, and by a domino effect, the announcement of the rebirth of anti-Western civilizations. The *Dasein* concept can then be repurposed for many different contexts: with a white-supremacist narrative for those hoping for a rebirth of the white race after its having been killed off by Western liberalism; or in a Russian version as done by the infamous geopolitician Alexander Dugin.

Dugin discovered Heidegger partly late in his intellectual journey. For a long time, the Russian ideologist was focused on classic figures of pro-Nazi traditionalism such as Julius Evola, and on the whole ideological construction of Nazi esotericism, before realizing how much Heidegger could offer to his theories. After several works about Heidegger were published in Russian (and at least one translated into English), and several translations of

Heidegger were published in Russian, Dugin adopted the Dasein concept in his *Fourth Political Theory* (2009), which, in a sense, is a tribute to Heidegger's engagement with a "spiritual" National Socialism.

In this volume, our contributors address how the *Black Notebooks* have dramatically reshuffled the deck of Heidegger studies (Richard Wolin), how Heidegger has been read in the Soviet-Russian context (Michail Maiatsky), and how Dugin has been reading Heidegger's philosophy, projecting his own interpretation back into the Western far-right world (Emmanuel Faye).

After *The Black Notebooks*: A Caesura in Heidegger Scholarship

Richard Wolin

Since the *Black Notebooks*' publication in 2014, the field of Heidegger studies has been in a permanent state of convulsion. As Judith Werner observed in her recent study *The Poetry of Annihilation: Literature and Poetry in Heidegger's "Black Notebooks"* (2019), the *Black Notebooks*' appearance triggered an "earthquake" that has provoked "a far-reaching caesura in Heidegger scholarship."¹

Within months, both the president and the vice-president of the International Heidegger Society abruptly resigned from their positions. The Freiburg University philosopher Günter Figal, in announcing his resignation as Heidegger Society president, explained that he could, in good conscience, no longer represent Heidegger's philosophy. Referencing Heidegger's numerous, distasteful professions of anti-Semitism in the *Notebooks*, Figal declared emphatically, "To think in this way is incompatible with the vocation of philosophy."² A few months after Figal's resignation, the president of Freiburg

¹ Judith Werner, *Poesie der Vernichtung: Literatur und Dichtung in Martin Heideggers "Schwarzen Heften"* (Wiesbaden: J. B. Metzler, 2018), 3, 8. For an assessment of the first wave of these debates, see Jan Eike Dunkhase, "Beiträge zur neuen Heidegger-Debatte," *H-Soz-Kult*, March 13, 2017, <https://www.hsozkult.de/publicationreview/id/reb-25610>, accessed August 15, 2020. Among the other relevant contributions, see Ingo Farin and Jeff Malpas, eds., *Reading Heidegger's "Black Notebooks," 1931-1941* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015); Peter Trawny and Andrew J. Mitchell, eds., *Heidegger's "Black Notebooks": Responses to Anti-Semitism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016); Peter Trawny and Andrew J. Mitchell, eds., *Heidegger, die Juden—noch einmal* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2015); Jean-Luc Nancy, *La Banalité de Heidegger* (Paris: Editions Galilée, 2015); Eggert Blum, "Die Heidegger-Debatte nach den 'Schwarzen Heften,'" *Stimmen der Zeit* 12 (2015); Marion Heinz and Sidonie Kellerer, eds., *Heideggers "Schwarze Hefte": Eine philosophisch-politische Debatte* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2016); Hans-Helmuth Gander and Magnus Striet, eds., *Heideggers Weg in die Moderne. Eine Verortung der "Schwarzen Hefte"* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2017); David Espinet, Günter Figal, Tobias Keiling, and Nikola Mirkovic, eds., *Heideggers "Schwarze Hefte" in Kontext: Geschichte, Politik, und Ideologie* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018); Marion Heinz and Tobias Bender, eds., "*Sein und Zeit*" neu verhandelt: *Untersuchungen Heideggers Hauptwerk* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 2019); Thomas Rohkrämer, *Martin Heidegger: Eine politische Biographie* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2020); "Jenseits von Polemik und Apologie: Die 'Schwarzen Hefte' in der Diskussion," *Heidegger Jahrbuch* 12 (2020); and Lorenz Jäger, *Martin Heidegger: Ein deutsches Leben* (Berlin: Rowohlt 2021).

² Concerning Günter Figal's resignation as President of the International Heidegger Society, see

University, where Heidegger taught for some four decades, announced the university's plans to decommission the *Lehrstuhl* that had been named in his honor.³

Figal's prognosis for the future of Heidegger studies was correspondingly bleak. "The philosophical future," claimed Figal, "portends the end of Heideggerianism." In line with Figal's judgment, the journalist Thomas Assheuer, writing in the esteemed German newsweekly *Die Zeit*, pithily summarized the consequences of the *Black Notebooks'* publication for Heidegger scholarship as follows: "The hermeneutic trick of acknowledging Heidegger's anti-Semitism only in order to permanently cordon it off from his philosophy proper is no longer convincing. The anti-Jewish enmity of the *Black Notebooks* is no afterthought. Instead, it forms the basis of Heidegger's philosophical diagnostics."⁴

The publication of *The Black Notebooks* motivated Figal to critically reassess the way that Heidegger, following the German defeat of 1945, had deployed his "technology-critique" in order to relativize the historical specificity of Nazi criminality. As Figal observed: "Following the end of World War II, Heidegger refused to acknowledge Germany's responsibility for war crimes. Instead of recognizing the Shoah's singularity, with the war's termination, Heidegger situated the existence of the extermination camps in an eschatological frame of reference that reduced all historical events to undifferentiated consequences of 'modern technics.'"⁵

Whereas in May 1945, many Germans greeted the Allied victory as a liberation from the tyranny of Nazi rule, Heidegger insisted that it was merely another episode in the long history of *Seinsvergessenheit*, or the forgetting of Being. According to Heidegger, Nazi Germany's excesses paled in comparison with the criminality of the Allied occupation, which, having unleashed its "machinery of death" (*Tötungsmaschinerie*), could only culminate in the "total annihilation" (*vollständige Vernichtung*) of Germany and the Germans.⁶

Figal's misgivings with respect to Heidegger's betrayal of the "vocation of philosophy" amounted to a de facto admission that Heidegger's more intransigent critics had been correct all along: the filiations between Heidegger's self-styled "originary thinking" (*anfängliches Denken*) and the "German ideology" of the 1920s and 1930s were *necessary* and *intrinsic* rather than *ephemeral* and *contingent*. Otto Pöggeler (1928-2014)—arguably

Dreyeckland, Radio 102.3, "So denkt man nicht, wenn man Philosophie treibt," January 9, 2015. See also "Das Ende des Heideggerianertums," interview with Günter Figal, *Badische Zeitung*, January 23, 2015.

³ Figal, "Das Ende des Heideggerianertums."

⁴ Thomas Assheuer, "Heideggers *Schwarze Hefte*: Der vergiftete Erbe," *Die Zeit*, March 21, 2014.

⁵ Espinet, Figal, Keiling, and Mirkovic, *Heideggers "Schwarze Hefte" in Kontext: Geschichte, Politik, Ideologie*, v-vi.

⁶ Martin Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I-V*, GA 97 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2015), 148.

Heidegger's foremost German exponent—had raised this specter as early as the 1990s when, in the afterword to *Heidegger's Path of Thought*, he enquired, "Was it not through a definite orientation of his thought that Heidegger fell—and not merely accidentally—into the proximity of National Socialism, without ever truly emerging from that proximity?"⁷

The History of Being as an Ontology of "German Exceptionalism"

The *Black Notebooks* confirm, at numerous points, that violence was the midwife of the Heideggerian *Seinsgeschichte*. At one point, Heidegger, true to the militaristic tenor of the Hitler-state, stated that "The path leading from Being to Thinking hews closely to the edge of annihilation [*Vernichtung*]." ⁸ And in *Contributions to Philosophy* (1936-38), he declared that "Wherever beings are to be changed by beings—not out of Being—*violence is necessary*. Every act is one of violence, such that, here, the violence is mastered by means of power."⁹

Heidegger's reformulation of metaphysics in a bellicist—and bellicose—register emerged clearly in the martial lexicon that suffuses the *Black Notebooks*. Employing a militaristic idiolect, Heidegger claimed that the *Notebooks'* goal was to stake out "advance and rearguard positions" in order to facilitate, through "conquest" (*Eroberung*), the ends of "original questioning."¹⁰ Expressing his contempt for the reigning philosophical orthodoxies, he added disdainfully, "Two years of military service is better preparation for the sciences than four semesters of 'study.'" ¹¹

One of the *Black Notebooks'* most disturbing traits is that they confirm that Heidegger's vision of the destiny of the West was inextricably wedded to a discourse of German particularism and chauvinism. According to Heidegger, Germany's task, in line with its preeminence and renown as a nation of *Dichter und Denker*, was to reestablish the ontological-historical link between the "Greek Beginning" and a conjectural and indeterminate Germanocentric "other Beginning" (*anderer Anfang*.)

In order to bring about this world-historical "transvaluation," Heidegger assigned the Nazi seizure of power a pivotal, transformative role. Hence, in a December 1930 letter to his brother Fritz, Heidegger characterized Hitler as a Teutonic Messiah: "No one who is insightful will dispute the fact that, whereas often the rest of us remain lost in the dark, this is a man [Hitler] who is possessed of a sure and remarkable political instinct. In the years to come, many other forces will fuse with the National Socialist movement. It is no longer a question of petty party politics. Instead, what is at stake is the redemption or

⁷ Otto Pöggeler, *Der Denkweg Martin Heideggers* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1994), 316.

⁸ Martin Heidegger, *Überlegungen VII-XI*, GA 95 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2014), 50.

⁹ Martin Heidegger, *Beiträge zur Philosophie* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1989), 282.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*; Heidegger, *Überlegungen VII-XI*, GA 95, 50.

¹¹ Heidegger, *Überlegungen VII-XI*, GA 95, 124.

destruction [Rettung oder Untergang] of Europe and Western Culture. Whoever fails to grasp this fact today will succumb to the gathering chaos."¹²

Accordingly, Heidegger's "history of Being" was simultaneously a *narrative of redemption* in which "German Dasein" played a paramount role. Heidegger regarded "German destiny" (*Schicksal, moira*) as the metaphysical key to overcoming the predicament of "European nihilism," as diagnosed fifty years earlier in the work of Nietzsche. Heidegger viewed "German Dasein" as a privileged ontological-historical totem that was uniquely capable of redeeming the West from its condition of twofold "Verlassenheit" or "abandonment": "abandonment by the gods" (*Gottesverlassenheit*) and "abandonment by Being" (*Seinsverlassenheit*). On this point, Heidegger could have been neither clearer nor more insistent. As he proclaimed in the *Black Notebooks*: "The anticipatory and essential moment of decision [*Entscheidung*] concerning the essence of history is reserved to the Germans."¹³

Here, an obvious question arises: In light of Heidegger's commitment to the salvific properties of "German Dasein," what role was left for philosophy? In the editorial afterward to *The Black Notebooks* volume 1 (GA 94), Peter Trawny has provided an extremely troubling, if entirely plausible, response. "It is undeniable," observes Trawny, "that Heidegger was convinced that, with the [National Socialist] Revolution, philosophy had reached its end; it must be replaced by the 'metapolitics of the historical Volk.'"¹⁴ In support of this claim, Trawny cited a telling declaration from *Überlegungen* III that attested to the eschatological function that Heidegger attributed to "German Dasein." "The metaphysics of Dasein," Heidegger asserted, "in accordance with its inner structure, must deepen itself and be extended to the metapolitics of the historical Volk."¹⁵

Trawny thus underlined the pivotal role that Heidegger's commitment to the ideology of German exceptionalism played in his later philosophy. By embracing the "metapolitics of the historical Volk," Heidegger perceived a way forward: a path that led beyond the *Untergang des Abendlandes* (Spengler) and toward the redemptory promise of "another Beginning." By wagering on the "metapolitics of the historical Volk," Heidegger conceived a meaningful alternative to the impotence and inefficacy of contemporary philosophy – his own existential ontology included.

¹² Arnulf Heidegger and Walter Homolka, eds., *Heidegger und der Antisemitismus: Positionen in Widerstreit* (Freiburg: Herder Verlag, 2016), 21-22.

¹³ Heidegger, *Überlegungen XII-XV*, GA 96, 235 (emphasis added).

¹⁴ Peter Trawny, "Nachwort des Herausgebers," in Heidegger, *Überlegungen II-VI*, GA 94, 533.

¹⁵ Heidegger, *Überlegungen II-VI*, GA 94, 124. For a perceptive commentary on these passages, see Emmanuel Faye, "Kategorien oder Existenzialien. Von der Metaphysik zur Metapolitik," in *Heideggers "Schwarze Hefte": Eine philosophisch-politische Debatte*, ed. Marion Heinz and Sidonie Kellerer (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2016), 100-121.

Needless to say, by invoking the “metapolitics of the historical *Volk*,” Heidegger did not mean any *Volk* whatsoever. He meant the *German Volk*, which, as *The Black Notebooks* attest, Heidegger regarded as *the only genuinely historical Volk*. Heidegger held that the Germans, as a *Volk*, displayed an ontological singularity: an existential “*Seinsart*” that justified his commitment to the ethos of “German exceptionalism.” Heidegger expressed this conviction unequivocally in *Überlegungen II*, observing, “Only someone who is German [*der Deutsche*] is capable of poetically articulating Being in an originary way.”¹⁶

Heidegger’s avowal is significant insofar as it confirms that he articulated his commitment to German superiority in *ontological terms*. Thus, with the advent of National Socialism, Heidegger became convinced that the “question of truth” (*Wahrheitsfrage*) and the question of “German destiny” (*deutsches Schicksal*) were metaphysically intertwined. On these grounds, he accorded *Deutschtum* an “exceptional” status in the metanarrative of *Seinsgeschichte*. Accordingly, in *On the Essence of Truth* (1933/34), Heidegger claimed that resolving the *Wahrheitsfrage* depended on recovering the “primordial laws of our Germanic tribal heritage [*Urgesetze unseres germanischen Menschenstammes*].”¹⁷

Historical and Unhistorical *Völker*: An Ontology of Ethnic Difference

The Black Notebooks confirm that Heidegger’s *Deuschtümelei*—his obsession with and privileging of “things German”—penetrated the very heart of his understanding of *Seinsgeschichte*, or the “history of Being.” They demonstrate the extent to which his ontological “Turn” during the 1930s was integrally bound up with an intensification of his commitment to the regenerative attributes of “German *Dasein*” and “German destiny.”

One especially problematic corollary of Heidegger’s “Germanophilia” was his conviction that *Deutschtum* possessed a “calling,” or *Sendung*, that elevated it metaphysically above other peoples. However, the “flip-side” of Heidegger’s commitment to *Germanentum* as *authentic historicity incarnate* was his ontological devaluation of Germany’s political rivals

¹⁶ Heidegger, *Überlegungen II-VI*, GA 94, 27. In *Politische Philosophie in Deutschland: Studien zu ihrer Geschichte* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1974), Hermann Lübbe describes the emergence of a dogmatic “Deutschland Metaphysik” as an integral component of the “Ideas of 1914.” As the epitome of this mentality, Lübbe cites Marburg neo-Kantian Paul Natorp’s (1854-1924) dictum: “The German aims to conquer the world, not for his own sake, but instead for that of humanity; not in order, thereby, to gain something, but instead as an act of generosity” (p. 194). Lübbe traces the development of this “Deutschland Metaphysik” back to J. G. Fichte’s *Addresses to the German Nation* (1807-08). He explains that by elevating “German thinking, German philosophy, and German science” to the status of a metaphysical *summum bonum*, Fichte endowed “what was merely factual with the character of necessity.” Hence, Fichte’s demarche is only “comprehensible as the metaphysical doubling of what is merely factual, thereby transforming it into an inner essence” (pp. 196-97).

¹⁷ Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Wahrheit*, GA 36/37 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2009), 89.

(England, France, and the United States), to say nothing of the *Untermenschen* who inhabited the Slavic lands to the East. Thus, whereas Heidegger maintained that the Germans had an ontological-historical “calling” and “mission” (*Sendung* and *Auftrag*) to fulfill, he denigrated Germany’s adversaries as *existentially flawed carriers of nihilism*—peoples who threatened to undermine Germany’s eschatological “destiny” and thereby jeopardize a successful resolution of the *Seinsfrage*.

Consequently, Heidegger had few qualms about dividing the world into *historical* and *unhistorical* peoples. Whereas in *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, Heidegger exalted the Germans as the “most metaphysical of peoples,” he devalued the Third Reich’s “enemies,” or *Feinde*, as *devoid of historicity*.¹⁸ Hence, recurring to the language of “political theology,” he condemned “America and Russia” as nations that “destroy . . . all that is world-spiritual [*welthaft Geistige*] . . . This is the onslaught of what we call *the demonic*, in the sense of *destructive evil*.”¹⁹ Thereby, Heidegger consistently consigned non-Germans to the purgatory of *Seinsvergessenheit*, or the “oblivion of Being.”

A case in point was Heidegger’s racist disqualification of “Negroes [*Neger*],” in *Logic as a Question Concerning the Essence of Language* (1934), as a people who, “despite being men, *have no history*.” Heidegger explained that in order to fathom the paradox of a *Volk*, or people, “without history,” it was necessary to distinguish between “History” and “history”; as he insisted via recourse to the diacritics of capitalization, “‘History’ and ‘history’ are not always the same.”²⁰ By virtue of this distinction, Heidegger affirmed that, from an ontological-historical perspective or standpoint, histories qualify as *authentic* insofar as they advance the cause of “historicity” (*Geschichtlichkeit*); conversely, histories that remain immured in the prison of *Seinsvergessenheit* patently do not.

In order to illustrate the difference between “History” and “history,” Heidegger stressed that not everything that “occurs” (*geschieht*) deserves to be classified as “historical” in the strong sense of *Geschichtlichkeit*. According to him, it would be just as foolish to allege that “Negroes” possess “history” as it would be to maintain—as natural scientists are wont to claim—that “nature” has “history.” “Not everything that ‘passes away,’” declaimed Heidegger, “becomes ‘Historical.’ When an airplane propeller turns, then nothing essential ‘occurs’ [*geschieht*]. Conversely, if the airplane in question brings the Führer to Mussolini, *then History takes place. The flight becomes History*. The airplane itself enters into History. It might even be displayed in a museum!”²¹

¹⁸ Martin Heidegger, *Einführung in die Metaphysik* GA 40 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1983), 41; Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1959), 38.

¹⁹ Heidegger, *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, 49-50 (emphasis added).

²⁰ Martin Heidegger, *Logik als Frage nach dem Wesen der Sprache*, GA 38 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2020), 81.

²¹ *Ibid.* On Heidegger’s “exclusionary,” Eurocentric ontological-historical biases, see Rainer Marten’s important essay “Heidegger and the Greeks,” in *The Heidegger Case: On Philosophy and*

Heidegger's insistence on classifying a summit between Hitler and Mussolini (which actually took place in Venice on June 14, 1934; Hitler indeed arrived by plane) as a paragon of "authentic historicity," while flatly denying that honorific to other peoples, speaks volumes about the afflictions and deficiencies of his concept of *Geschichtlichkeit*. Telling in this respect is that, in Heidegger's exposition of *Geschichtlichkeit* in *Being and Time* (1927), he invoked—in a passage that exalted, *seriatim*, *Gemeinschaft* (community), *Geschick* (fate), and *Generation*—the existential paramountcy of the *Volksbegriff*. As Heidegger asserted: "If fateful Dasein. . . exists essentially in Being-with-Others, its co-historizing is determinative for it as *destiny* [*Geschick*]. This is how we designate the *historizing of the community* [*Gemeinschaft*], of a *Volk*. . . Dasein's fateful destiny in and with its *Generation*."²²

The "Generation" that Heidegger had in mind was, indubitably, the *Frontgeneration*, which, among conservative revolutionary thinkers such as Heidegger, Carl Schmitt, and Ernst Jünger, had become an iconic point of reference: an unsurpassed paragon of *authentic historical community*. To wit, in a seminal 1934 address on the destiny and mission of "The German University," Heidegger celebrated the *Frontgeist* (spirit-of-the-front) as a transformative *Ereignis* (Event) in the developmental trajectory of "German Dasein": a pivotal waystation on Germany's path toward National Socialism. "The genuine preparation for the National Socialist Revolution," claimed Heidegger, "began in earnest . . . during the World War. At the Front . . . an entirely new idea of *Gemeinschaft* took shape. This new spirit from the Front bore within itself a *strong will* . . . that, after the war, became the defining power of the *Dasein* of the *Volk* . . . The awakening of the *Frontgeist* during the war and its reaffirmation after the war is nothing other than the creative transformation of this 'Event' into a formative power of future *Dasein*."²³ Heidegger's remarks exemplify

Politics, ed. Tom Rockmore (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1992), 169. According to Marten, Heidegger held that "Western man represents the human race, because Western man is the only one with a history. And what about the Egyptians and the Indians, the Sumerians, the Chinese, and the Aztecs? Without question, they have no history at the point where history is defined narrowly and 'rigorously'—that is, qua *historicity*."

²² Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, GA 2 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1977), 508: "Denn aber das schicksalhafte Dasein als In-der-Welt-sein wesentlich als Mitsein mit Anderen existiert, ist sein Geschehen ein Mitgeschehen und bestimmt als *Geschick*. Damit bezeichnen wir das Geschehen der *Gemeinschaft*, des *Volkes* . . . Miteinandersein in derselben Welt und in der Entschlossenheit für bestimmte Möglichkeiten sind die Schicksale im vorhinein schon geleitet in der Mitteilung und im Kampf wird die Macht des *Geschickes* erst frei. Das schicksalhafte *Geschick* des *Daseins* in und mit seiner ‚*Generation*‘ macht das volle, eigentliche Geschehen des *Daseins* aus. . . Die eigentliche Wiederholung einer gewesenen Existenzmöglichkeit—dass das *Dasein* seinen Helden wählt—gründet existenzial in der vorlaufenden Entschlossenheit; den in ihr wird allererst die Wahl gewählt, die kämpfende Nachfolge und Treue zum Wiederholbaren frei macht"; *Being and Time*, 436. For a commentary on this passage, see Fritsche, *Historical Destiny and National Socialism in Heidegger's "Being and Time"* (Berkeley, CA: University of California, 1999), 1-28.

²³ Martin Heidegger, "Die deutsche Universität," in *Reden und andere Zeugnisse eines Lebensweges*, GA 16 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2000), 299-300.

the way in which, in his later fundamental ontology, the history of Being and the history of “German Dasein” were inextricably fused.

The foregoing remarks demonstrate that Heidegger viewed “Völker,” or individual “peoples,” as the essential “carriers” of history—a conviction that confirms his status as an essentially *völkisch* thinker. Heidegger discounted “universal history” as a metaphysical abstraction bequeathed by the Enlightenment. The “cosmopolitan spirit” was entirely alien to his *Denkhabitus*. How could it be otherwise, given his fateful proximity to the ideology and ethos of *German singularity*?

Existential Geopolitics

Heidegger’s fidelity to the *Volksbegriff* was reflected in his conviction that a people’s capacity for knowledge (*Erkenntnis*) was conditioned by race. Consequently, in *The Black Notebooks*, Heidegger exalted race as a “*necessary and mediate condition of historical Dasein*.”²⁴ Similarly, in *Logic as a Question Concerning the Essence of Language*, he lauded “blood” — “Blut und das Geblut” — as a stand-in for “race” as the basis of the *Volk*’s “spirituality.” “The spirituality of our Dasein [*die Geistigkeit unseres Daseins*],” proclaimed Heidegger, emerges from the “voice of blood [*Stimme des Blutes*].”²⁵ Heidegger’s concerted defense of “spiritual racism” was meant to counteract the temptations of interpreting race in accordance with the regressive epistemology of the “bourgeois” natural sciences.

As we have seen, Heidegger held that “German Dasein” displayed an unquestionable “metaphysical” superiority—a sentiment confirmed by his portentous declaration that “*The German alone . . . will conquer the essence of theoria*.”²⁶ In Heidegger’s view, the “question of truth” and the question of “German destiny” were inherently intertwined. Thus, in *On the Essence of Truth*, Heidegger claimed that the capacity to fathom the essential nature of Being was tied to “the deepest necessity of German Dasein.”²⁷ On these grounds, Heidegger accorded *Deutschtum* an exceptional status in the metanarrative of *Seinsgeschichte*.

Heidegger’s commitment to the ideology of German exceptionalism led him to the “racialist” conclusion that the capacity-for-truth was unequally distributed among the world’s *Völker*, or peoples. In his view, *Deutschtum*’s unique capacity-for-truth was counterbalanced by the defective understanding of truth displayed by inferior, “unhistorical” races or peoples: Jews, Slavs, and—as mentioned above—“Negroes.” In Heidegger’s estimation, the latter group’s ontological deficiencies reduced them to avatars of *Seinsvergessenheit*.

²⁴ Heidegger, *Überlegungen*, II-VI, GA 94, 189.

²⁵ Heidegger, *Logik als die Frage nach dem Wesen der Sprache*, 153.

²⁶ Heidegger, *Überlegungen*, II-VI, 71.

²⁷ Heidegger, *Sein und Wahrheit*, GA 36/37, 89.

Hence, Heidegger perceived the “history of Being” as inherently and unavoidably a *racial* struggle, or *Kampf*. In order for Germany’s “salvific” role to be fulfilled, it was necessary to do battle with the ideological and geopolitical adversaries who threatened to impede or obstruct the path to “another Beginning.”

The “ontological differences” between peoples that Heidegger discerned—their hierarchical standing in the developmental trajectory of *Seinsgeschichte*—were predicated on *racial distinctions*, namely on the confluence of *Volk*, *Boden*, and *Geschichte*, which Heidegger regarded as the keys to deciphering the fluctuations and rhythms of *Geschichtlichkeit*. As such, his embrace of the *Volksbegriff* was overdetermined by his understanding of “existential geopolitics.”

Heidegger developed his views on the interrelationship between *Volk*, “rootedness,” and the “politics of space” (*Raumpolitik*) in his 1934 seminar *On Nature, History, and State*. “Every *Volk*,” claimed Heidegger, “has a space that belongs to it. People who live by the sea, in the mountains, and on the plains are different.”²⁸

As a *völkisch* thinker—and in keeping with his commitment to the “politics of space”—Heidegger elevated the values of *Heimat* and *Bodenständigkeit* (rootedness-in-soil) to a position of ontological primacy. “All attempts at renewal and innovation,” argued Heidegger, “will remain hopeless unless we succeed in returning to the nurturing powers of our native soil [*heimatlichen Boden*].”²⁹ He reaffirmed this view in *Nature, History, and State*, claiming that “A *Heimat* expresses itself in *rootedness-in-soil* and *being-bound to the earth* [*Bodenständigkeit und Erdgebundenheit*].”³⁰

As a champion of “existential geopolitics,” Heidegger’s commitment to “rootedness-in-soil and being-bound to the earth” culminated in his conviction that different *Völker* (peoples) “cognized” or “experienced” space in different ways. As he asserted in *Nature, History, and State*, “From the specific knowledge of a *Volk* about the nature of its space [*Raum*], we first experience how nature reveals itself to this *Volk*. In the case of a Slavic *Volk*, the nature of our *German space* would definitely be revealed differently from the way it is revealed to us. Conversely, to Semitic nomads, it will perhaps never be revealed at all.”³¹ In keeping with the strictures of academic decorum, Heidegger refrained from mentioning “Jews” outright, preferring instead the euphemism “Semitic nomads.”

²⁸ Martin Heidegger, “Über Wesen und Begriff von Natur, Geschichte, und Staat,” *Heidegger-Jahrbuch* 4: “Heidegger and der Nationalsozialismus I” (Freiburg: Karl Alber, 2009): 81-82 (emphasis added).

²⁹ Heidegger, *Reden und andere Zeugnisse eines Lebensweges*, GA 16, 55.

³⁰ Heidegger, “Natur, Geschichte, und Staat,” 82.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 81-82 (emphasis added).

In the discourse of anti-Semitism, the denigration of Jews as “nomads” had a long and unsavory pedigree. In *The Law of Nomadism and Contemporary Jewish Dominance* (1883), the Austrian Orientalist Adolf Wahrmund argued that Jews, qua “nomads,” represented an alien ethnic presence on the “Indo-European” (read: “Aryan”) cultural landscape. Thus, as racially undesirable “trespassers,” Jewish influence could only prove disintegrative and malign.

Similarly, in *The Jews and Modern Capitalism* (1911), Werner Sombart, amplifying Wahrmund’s views, claimed that Jews, because of their putative nomadic origins, lacked a meaningful attachment to place. Jewish “rootlessness,” contended Sombart, was destined to thrive in an economic system—such as capitalism—that was predicated on the free circulation of money and capital. As shifty cultural interlopers, Jews were purportedly attracted to trades such as banking and commerce, in which overcoming the constraints of national borders was essential.³²

As for the Slavic peoples, Heidegger supplemented his indictment of their inability to cognize “German space” with an “existential” justification of Nazi Germany’s geopolitical “push to the east” (*Drang nach Osten*): the necessity for the German *Volk*, as leading “carriers of culture” (*ein kulturtragendes Volk*), to push beyond their current borders. As Heidegger avowed in *Nature, History, and State*, “The mastery of space belongs to the essence and ontological distinctiveness [*Seinsart*] of a *Volk*.”³³ Thereby, Heidegger justified the Social Darwinist imperatives of *Raumpolitik*, which held that *Völker* who failed to expand their “Raum,” or “space,” stagnated existentially and became moribund.

The fact that Heidegger viewed different “peoples,” or *Völker*, as ontologically distinct—as defined by a self-enclosed, existentially specific “*Seinsart*”—further attests to his advocacy of “spiritual racism,” an approach to race thinking that was mediated by “existential” and “cultural” factors. It was in this vein that, already in a letter of 1921, Heidegger described himself revealingly as a “*spiritual anti-Semite*.”³⁴

Heidegger concluded *Nature, History, and State* by highlighting the injustice that, beyond the Reich’s borders, there dwelled millions of Germans who were deprived of a state. Though these so-called *Volksdeutsche* nominally possessed a *Heimat*, Heidegger claimed that they were in constant danger of “forfeiting their ontological authenticity [*so ihrer eigentlichen Seinsweise entbehren*],” since the latter was contingent on belonging to a state, which, in his view, was a prerequisite for fulfilling the demands of *völkisch* “self-assertion” (*Selbstbehauptung*).³⁵ According to Heidegger, the predicament of the *Volksdeutsche* could

³² Werner Sombart, *The Jews and Modern Economic Life*, trans. Mordecai Epstein (Kitchener, ON: Batoche Books, 2001), 240.

³³ Heidegger, “Natur, Geschichte, und Staat,” 79, 81.

³⁴ Gertrud Heidegger, ed., “*Mein liebes Seelchen!*” *Briefe Martin Heideggers an seiner Frau Elfride, 1915-1970* (Munich: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 2005), 116.

³⁵ Heidegger, “Natur, Geschichte, und Staat,” 82.

be remedied only by incorporating them into the *Grossdeutsches Reich*, an ill-defined Nazi concept that, in essence, served as a writ for unlimited geopolitical expansion.

In view of the pivotal role that Heidegger's thought has played in legitimating the worldviews of the European and American far rights, the preceding critique of his *Denkhabitus* assumes an additional timeliness and importance. In numerous cases, Heidegger's anti-cosmopolitan views, his inflexible antihumanism, his celebration of the primacy of *ethnos* over *demos*, and his rejection of egalitarianism in favor of the *Führerprinzip* have been enthusiastically received by champions of the transatlantic "New Right" (Nouvelle Droite, Neue Rechte), whose representatives have provided crucial ideological support for the rising tide of authoritarian national populism.

For example, when the architect and *éminence grise* of the French Nouvelle Droite, Dominique Venner, took his own life during a Tuesday morning service at the Notre Dame cathedral in April 2013, he left a suicide note that honored Heidegger as a major progenitor and inspiration behind the worldview of postwar neofascism. In his missive, Venner exalted his suicide as a paradigmatic instance of Heideggerian "Being-toward-death" (*Sein-zum-Tode*): an act that honored Heidegger's disavowal of "transcendence" in favor of a neo-pagan affirmation of *Diessseitigkeit*, or "Being-in-the-world." "We must remember," declared Venner, "that, as Heidegger aptly phrased it in *Being and Time*, the essence of man lies in his existence and not in a world 'beyond.' It is in the here-and-now that our destiny plays itself out, up until the very last moment."³⁶

It was Venner—a former OAS (Organisation de l'armée secrète) operative who, in 1961-1962, served an eighteen-month sentence for sedition—who, along with his better-known protégé, Alain de Benoist, pioneered the Nouvelle Droite strategy of "metapolitics," a "Gramscism of the Right" that viewed far-right ideas' attainment of ideological "hegemony" as a necessary prelude to the conquest of political power.

Unsurprisingly, Heidegger's thought has also served as an ever-present touchstone and point of reference among the far-right publicists and ideologues who have overseen the rise of Germany's Neue Rechte, a cohort of "spiritual reactionaries" who have consciously modeled their tactics after the pattern established by the Nouvelle Droite.³⁷ In post-reunification Germany, the Neue Rechte—with its influential network of think tanks,

³⁶ Dominique Venner, "Les Manifestants du 26 mai et Heidegger," <http://www.dominiquevenner.fr/>, accessed June 25, 2020. See also Caroline Monnet and Abel Mestre, "Figure de l'extrême droite, Venner a fait de son suicide un 'sacrifice politique,'" *Le Monde*, May 22, 2013.

³⁷ See Roger Woods, *Germany's New Right as Culture and as Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan 2007); see also the useful clarification in Julian Göppfarth, "Rethinking the German Nation as German Dasein: Intellectuals and Heidegger's Philosophy in Contemporary German New Right Nationalism," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 25 (2020): 248-73.

publishing houses, and internet sites—has served as an indispensable alembic for the germination of neofascist ideas.

Proponents of the *Neue Rechte* have expressly defined their mission as rehabilitating the worldview of “conservative revolutionaries” like Heidegger, Carl Schmitt, and Oswald Spengler, who, during the 1920s, purportedly advanced a more “salonfähig,” or intellectually respectable, version of fascist ideology. *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD)—which, from 2017 to 2021, served as the official opposition party in the Bundestag—is a direct political legatee of the *Neue Rechte*. As Björn Höcke, the head of the AfD’s Thuringian branch and the leader of its controversial extreme-right faction, “*Der Flügel*” (recently placed on the watchlist of suspected anti-constitutional organizations by the German federal intelligence services), recently observed: “As Germans, we must ask ‘who we are.’ We need to say ‘Yes’ to this We. The German *Volk* must detach itself from the matrix of the contemporary *Zeitgeist*. It must surmount its ‘*Seinsvergessenheit*’ and instead come closer to its ‘*Seinsordnung*.’” “Of course,” concluded Höcke, “that is Heidegger!”³⁸

Finally, in a 2018 interview with the German news magazine *Der Spiegel*, Donald Trump’s former campaign manager and chief political strategist, Steve Bannon—who, in 2016, quipped that he wanted to make Breitbart News a “platform for the Alt Right”—invoked Heidegger as an intellectual inspiration and role model. As *Der Spiegel* journalist Christoph Scheuermann described their encounter:

We sit down at the dining room table and [Bannon] picks up a book, a biography of the philosopher Martin Heidegger. “*That’s my guy!*”, Bannon says. Heidegger, he says, had some good ideas on the subject of Being, which fascinates him . . . [Bannon] jumps from the depths of politics to the heights of philosophy, from the swamp to Heidegger in five seconds. What sets us apart from animals or rocks, Bannon asks? What does it mean to be human? How far should digital progress go?³⁹

³⁸ Cited in Justus Binder and Reinhard Bingener, “Das wird man wohl noch aushalten dürfen,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, November 11, 2015: „Wir müssen als Deutsche fragen, wer wir sind’, sagt er. ‚Wir brauchen ein Ja zum Wir.’ Das deutsche Volk müsse sich von der ‚Zeitgeistmatrix’ lösen, es müsse aus seiner ‚Seinsvergessenheit’ heraustreten und stattdessen wieder seiner ‚Seinsordnung’ näherkommen. ‚Ja, das ist Heidegger.’” See also Pascal Zorn, “Höcke und Heidegger,” *Hohe Luft*, December 3, 2015, <https://www.hoheluftmagazin.de/2015/12/hoecke-und-heidegger/>.

³⁹ Christoph Scheuermann, “The Steve Bannon Project: Searching in Europe for Glory Days Gone by,” *Der Spiegel*, October 29, 2018, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/stephen-bannon-tries-rightwing-revolution-in-europe-a-1235297.html>. Bannon’s claim that he wanted to turn Breitbart into the “platform of the alt-right” was quoted by Sarah Posner in “How Donald Trump’s New Campaign Chief Created an Online Haven for White Nationalists,” *Mother Jones*, August 22, 2016.

Of course, it is extremely doubtful whether Bannon ever actually read Heidegger, much less understood him. Nevertheless, Bannon's remarks are indicative of the enormous political cachet that Heidegger's thought has acquired among advocates of the global New Right, whose representatives have played an outsized role in eroding the norms of democratic legitimacy and promoting the counterrevolutionary values of an authoritarian white ethno-state.

Heretofore, the strategy of containment practiced by Heidegger's vociferous champions had been to acknowledge and reject his political compromises with the Nazi dictatorship while claiming "nothing has really changed": none of his "compromises," no matter how grievous or reprehensible, impugned his philosophy in the least. The *Black Notebooks* represent a caesura in Heidegger scholarship insofar as they have made such rationalizations and excuses permanently untenable. No longer is it possible to claim that a neat separation exists between "Heidegger the political actor" and "Heidegger the philosopher." Instead, the *Black Notebooks* confirm that Heidegger's fundamental ontology itself served as the transcendental "ground" or "generator" of his political convictions.

This does not mean that Heidegger thought is permanently "contaminated" and should therefore be omitted from the canon of Western philosophy. It does, however, mean that his philosophy must be stringently reinterpreted and reread with a new attentiveness and vigilance—that is, with a heightened awareness of its deep-seated, structural indebtedness to the proto-fascist Zeitgeist of the interwar period. Hence, with respect to Heidegger's *Denken*, the labors of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, or "mastering the past," remain an urgent and ongoing task.

Reading Heidegger in Russia before and after the *Black Notebooks*

Michail Maiatsky

Some important clues for understanding the recent and current reception of Heidegger can be found in its previous “seasons.” Reception of Heidegger in Russia began as early as the Soviet period but, of course, in the complete absence of translations and in the form of “criticism of contemporary bourgeois philosophy.” However, this criticism was often⁴⁰ accurate and transparent enough for the astute reader to discern the real traits of the doctrine. The political aspects were not seriously touched upon: it was enough that Heidegger, like virtually every Western philosopher, belonged to the “lackeys of capital”; to insist on his philosophy’s National Socialist component would have meant exposing him to the danger of a complete ban and jeopardizing the hope of any possible future translations. To obscure, to soften, to attenuate the radicalism of Western right-wing and/or reactionary authors in order to fool the censors was a widespread (if paradoxical) practice at the time.

A new phase in reception was undoubtedly inaugurated by Vladimir Bibikhin (1938-2004), who to a large extent continues to determine the actual interpretation as well, for better or for worse. His first works (which were in fact retellings of Heidegger’s otherwise unknown works) were written for special closed collections “for official use,” which, if they were no longer transcribed by hand or reprinted in five copies, as, say, Mandelstam’s poems had been, were photocopied in a *samizdat* fashion: their actual audience was much larger than the official number of copies suggested. Bibikhin’s choice of texts (mostly on Nihilism) also largely determined the agenda of reception: Heidegger emerged above all as a ruthless critic of Modernity. In the background, Heidegger’s critique of “real socialism” as a form and consequence of modernity was suggested (or insinuated). Bibikhin also became one of the first Heidegger translators and interpreters, and soon the most revered of them all:

There was always here some intense interest in Heidegger, in spite of (but partly due to) the fact that there was no visible tradition of Heidegger studies. The unconditional leader of these studies, Vladimir Veniaminovich Bibikhin (1938–2004), was almost a lonely figure. The few Heidegger scholars worked separately,

⁴⁰ One could name Rimma Gabitova, Piama Gaidenko, Nelly Motroshilova, and Erich Solovyov.

and one cannot say that there ever existed such a thing as the “Russian community of Heidegger scholars.”⁴¹

Post-Soviet Reception

In the years that followed, dozens of Heidegger’s texts were translated, some (including *Being and Time*) in more than one version. When it comes to international scholarship on Heidegger, relatively few works have been translated, namely Biemel (1998), Safranski (2002, 2005), Bourdieu (2003), Gadamer (2005), Beaufret (2007-2009), Fédier (2008), Krzysztof Michalski (2010), and recently Faye (2021). Note that Farías’s book is missing, but Fedier’s “analysis” thereof has been translated.

Domestic research literature began to appear as well, evoking a certain “Russian tradition of perception of Heidegger”⁴². Some nationalist and/or conservative scholars, as we shall see, work hard to insist on the (alleged) merits of this domestic tradition of interpreting Heidegger compared to the Western one, including in the context of the *Black Notebooks*.

When it came to political issues, Bibikhin (as the major figure of the emerging post-Soviet reception) did not skirt them, but in their treatment followed mainly Heidegger’s own line of self-defense. Bibikhin added to Heidegger’s justification a humble stance of “who are we to judge the great thinker” and “we should not judge Heidegger, but try to continue Heidegger’s work, namely Thinking.” One should also mention Bibikhin’s extraordinary personal charm, gentleness, and his high philological culture of philosophical translation. It is worth recalling that during this period not only political, but also general censorship and the official style of editing, which

⁴¹ Sergey Horujy, “Heidegger, Synergic Anthropology, and the Problem of Anthropological Pluralism,” in *Heidegger in Russia and Eastern Europe*, ed. Jeff Love (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017), 325-353, 325.

⁴² Cf. a thousand-page volume, Yu. Romanenko, ed., *Khaidegger: Pro et Contra* (St. Petersburg: RChGA, 2020), and Yu. Romanenko, ed., *Khaidegger i russkaia filosofskaia mysl'* (St. Petersburg: RChGA, 2021). Both volumes are major products of the RFBR (Russian Foundation for Basic Research) research grant No. 18-011-00753, “The Reception and Transformation of Martin Heidegger’s Ideas in the Russian Philosophical Thought.” In a review published in a respected historical-philosophical yearbook, Heidegger researcher Igor Mikhailov subjected both books to a devastating critique: the compilers selected the texts merely on the principle that they mentioned Heidegger’s name; most of them simply expound the philosophy of their authors and have nothing to do with Heidegger; they would at most “be suitable for a textbook on the pathologies of the reception of the historical-philosophical heritage”. Thus a “myth of tradition” is created (Igor Mikhailov, “Retsenziya...” Mikhailov, I.A. “Rets. na kn.: Romanenko Yu. (ed.) M. Khaidegger i russkaya filosofskaya mysl'”; Romanenko Yu. (ed.) M. Khaidegger: pro et contra, *Antologiya*” [Review: Romanenko Yu. (ed.) M. Heidegger and the Russian Philosophical Thought; Romanenko Yu. (ed.) M. Heidegger: pro et contra, *Anthology, Istoriko-filosofskii ezhegodnik*, 2021, No. 36, pp. 389–408. The compilers declare: “It would not be an exaggeration to say that by now an authentic domestic tradition of translating, reading, and interpreting Heidegger’s writings has taken shape.” Yet in fact, Mikhailov argues, they replicate the clichés of the most inadequate impressions of the German philosopher. The reviewer concludes: “The ignorance of Heidegger in Russia that persists to this day is now presented as a rich tradition of interpretations” (Ibid., 408).

“combed” and normalized the style of all translations, collapsed. This change made it possible to search for a language specific to the author being translated, on the one hand, and the translator, on the other hand. It is noteworthy that while Bibikhin’s translations have begun to be criticized, his reading of Heidegger has so far rarely been openly challenged.

A turning point in the reception of Heidegger is associated with the international conference in honor of Heidegger’s 100th birthday in Moscow in 1989, the proceedings of which (with articles by Russian scholars Bibikhin, Molchanov, Motroshilova, Podoroga, and “foreigners” Anz, von Herrmann, Nancy, Rorty, Brunkhorst, Pöggeler, Waite, and Hösle)⁴³ directly addressed questions of Heidegger’s political engagement. Yet, the publishing boom of the 1990s and 2010s—which affected Heidegger as it did most 20th-century philosophy—gradually stabilized. No new studies comparable in influence to those of the charismatic Bibikhin emerged. With the exception of Dugin’s trilogy (2010, 2011, 2014), which is generally not taken seriously (and with good reason) even in the conservative camp, Heideggerianism has become academic. A new wave of public attention arose with the publication of the *Black Notebooks*; in this sense, the situation in Russia differs little from other Western countries.

Encountering the *Black Notebooks*: Nelly Motroshilova

Before any Russian translation appeared, Nelly Motroshilova (1934-2021) became the first to respond to the appearance of the early volumes of the *Black Notebooks* with two articles,⁴⁴ albeit emphasizing the tentative nature of her analysis. She offered a chronology and a balanced overview of Western, especially German, debates;⁴⁵ she then very didactically laid out the basics of Heidegger’s doctrine as the essential context for interpreting the *Black Notebooks*. She finally explained and contextualized some keywords that frequently recur in the *Black Notebooks*.

Motroshilova’s own position can be summarized as follows: Heidegger was undoubtedly a great philosopher, but he was more wrong than his friends Jaspers and Arendt care to admit. One cannot deny, she writes, “the historical achievements of Heidegger’s philosophy.”⁴⁶ He was an outstanding expert in the history of philosophy (no small appraisal, coming from the pen of the longtime Head of the History of Philosophy Department of the Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences), although his characterizations of Modern (*neuzeitliche*) philosophy are incongruously sweeping. *Being and Time* is a great book, any criticism notwithstanding, and Heidegger’s ontological reflections have proved extremely seminal. In assessing a thinker of the past, historians of philosophy must also consider his personal context, his psychological profile.

⁴³ Nelly Motroshilova, ed., *Filosofia Martina Khaideggera i sovremennost’* (Moscow: Nauka, 1991).

⁴⁴ Nelly Motroshilova, “‘Chernye tetrad’ M. Khaideggera: po sledam publikatsii,” *Voprosy filosofii* 4 (2015): 121–162; Nelly Motroshilova, “I snova o ‘Chernykh tetradyakh’ Martina Khaideggera (k debatam leta — oseni 2015 g.),” *Voprosy filosofii* 7 (2016): 39–54. Cited here after the reprint in Romanenko, *Khaidegger: Pro et Contra*, 963–987.

⁴⁵ By her own account, of the Western Heidegger scholars, the positions of Dieter Thomä, Markus Gabriel, Donatella Di Cesare, and Heiner Klemme are the nearest to hers.

⁴⁶ Motroshilova, “I snova o ‘Chernykh tetradyakh,’” 985 f.

As an individual, Heidegger was narcissistic, conceited, wimpish, egocentric, and power-hungry. He rejected many major thinkers in order to eventually exalt his own project.⁴⁷ He never repented of anything, even if he did clearly disreputable things.

As for the *Black Notebooks*, Motroshilova contends that they have revealed much about understanding Heidegger in general and his period as rector of the University of Freiburg in particular. Those who claim the opposite, she writes, either have not read them or want to avoid the truth that becomes clear and undeniable while reading them, namely: that Heidegger was not a critic of National Socialism, but offered his own version of it, rejecting the real one (as many Nazis did); that Heidegger hoped for a great career under National Socialism as the chief ideologue (or the right hand of the chief ideologue); and that ideally, he wanted to “lead the leader” (*den Führer führen*). Heidegger’s anti-Semitic statements, though relatively few in number, are clearly, confidently, and vigorously embedded in his conception of the collapse of the West in Modernity (*Neuzeit*). Motroshilova unequivocally condemns the petty biases and omissions made by both Fédier and his Russian friend Bibikhin to justify their interpretation of Heidegger’s National-Socialist commitment and anti-Semitism. To the question of whether or not the *Black Notebooks* have value, she replies:

Some of Heidegger’s ideas and concepts—say, in connection with the application and clarification of the concepts central to the *Black Notebooks* like “Machenschaft(en),” “Rechnerische,” and “Riesige”—help him not only to analyze social processes, the features of consciousness of individuals and social groups of his time, quite deeply, but even to gaze into the 21st century. Some of his accusations against the truly modern distinctive features of “Sein” as “Seiende” still retain their force today.⁴⁸

It is also important that these are thousands of pages of his own handwritten and edited text, in contrast to much of his legacy, which is a reconstruction of his lecture and seminar courses. Additional value is derived from the fact that the *Black Notebooks*, in all their abundance, emerged during a period long known in the literature as “Heidegger’s silent period.” The main content of the *Black Notebooks* is still not political or nationalist, but philosophical, and they clearly show us the gradual emergence of his new ontological approach through self-criticism of *Being and Time* and others of his early writings.

Motroshilova finds it surprising that Heidegger’s anti-Russian sentiments (even during the Eastern campaign) are nowhere near as acute as his anti-Jewish, anti-English, and anti-American ones. On the whole, she endorses Heidegger’s reflections on a “Russian nature” (*Russentum*) as open to God and Being and alien to Bolshevism and thus to all Modernity, from which both the Russian and German peoples must be delivered.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 970.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 986.

Many people who had never read Heidegger before were involved in the debate around *Black Notebooks*, most of them journalists. This resulted in a tendency, in Motroshilova's view, toward sensationalism, sharp judgments, and disregard of the philosophical issues:

I think we should not discuss Heidegger's philosophy in the irritable, negative, sweeping style in which he himself allowed himself to speak in his *Black Notebooks* about the great philosophy of the Modernity. As a matter of fact, not only did he "develop" the ideas of his own writings, but he also neglected his earlier theoretical findings, so I consider such a topic as "Heidegger's legacy ... against the *Black Notebooks*" quite worthy of attention. For if doubts about the high value of the best, innovative elements in Heidegger's philosophy have gone so far—and have turned, in my view, into a purely negativist, everything-and-anything sweeping trend dangerous for philosophy—then philosophers simply must resist it.⁴⁹

Motroshilova also addresses the problem of the philosophical value of Heidegger in view of the new light shed on him by the *Black Notebooks*:

To the question posed by a number of authors, "How did philosophical depth and political monstrosity combine in one thinker?" I answer: they did not combine at all, but sharply contradicted each other. My conclusion is: Heidegger's ideological heritage does not combine very different parts, but breaks up into parts, one of which, i.e. the philosophical and theoretical part, is generally worthy of an outstanding, original thinker (including all the changes, twists, flaws), while the other, where (mostly) social, political, philosophical-historical questions are raised, sometimes looks as if it was invented by another person, often falling into the worst stereotypes and prejudices in his reasoning. [...] Heidegger (with his undeniable philosophical gift) almost completely lacked not only a talent, but any ability to think in any mature way about sociopolitical themes.⁵⁰

Taking the political Heidegger seriously: Vladimir and Dagmar Mironov

As we see, Motroshilova thus continues Arendt's line of ambivalent criticism-defense of Heidegger. This is not exactly the line taken by the duo of Vladimir and Dagmar Mironov.⁵¹ The former (1953-2020) was for many years Dean of the Philosophy Department of Moscow State University; the second, a German by birth, works on the theory of rationality, as well as on the foundations of political science. What they have in common with Motroshilova is a resolute refusal to disregard the thinker's political engagement, which his defenders declare "uninteresting" and "unessential."

⁴⁹ Ibid., 987.

⁵⁰ Motroshilova, "'Chernye tetradi' M. Khaideggera," 157-159.

⁵¹ Vladimir Mironov and Dagmar Mironova, "Filosof i vlast': sluchai Khaideggera," *Voprosy filosofii* 7 (2016): 21-36; Vladimir Mironov and Dagmar Mironova, "Ein Knabe, der träumt, ili Opianenie vlastiu," *Logos* 28, no. 3 (2018): 149-182.

The Mironovs condemn Arendt for trying to whitewash Heidegger, but overall subscribe to Arendt's famous diagnosis: the philosopher at first, for the sake of philosophy, turned his back on the political, only to return to it later and to apply to the field of human affairs the criteria of the extra-political realm, with the inevitable result that the philosopher betrayed philosophy while implementing it in politics. It must not be overlooked that Heidegger was far from unique in his embrace of National Socialism; even if he was by far the greatest philosopher among his contemporaries, the vast majority of those philosophers who remained in Germany embraced National-Socialism. This should not in any way justify Heidegger, but simply serve to contextualize him. It is obvious that he bears moral responsibility for his philosophical legitimization of Nazism.

As for the *Black Notebooks*, the vigorous discussion around them that extends far beyond narrow philosophical circles:

is, among other things, a kind of rebuke to the postmodernist "author's funeral." It is often the peculiarities of the author's personality that make it possible to understand his text more deeply, and the text, in turn, becomes the key to understanding his actions. Moreover, the author turns out to be a real actor of emerging meanings after his physical death, as is the case with the *Black Notebooks*.⁵²

The facts concerning Heidegger's Nazi engagement have long been known and documented. But before the publication of the *Black Notebooks* they were attenuated by the circulation of false information emanating from Heidegger's family or unabashed defenders, who alleged, among other things, that Heidegger was only briefly deluded by the Nazis, was distant from politics, and never read *Mein Kampf*.

The Mironovs find proto-Nazi elements in Heidegger's behavior well before the Nazis came to power and he became rector of the University of Freiburg. A decade earlier, he had already resorted to violent methods, not hesitating to bring in a strike team of 16 fighters to press the university authorities to accept his candidacy. Heidegger's position was thus no accident nor passing delusion. It was a deliberate, conscious choice, made when the Nazi regime was still trying to take shape. Karl Jaspers' role as Heidegger's partner in the "aristocratic university" projects of the pre-Nazi period is also often unflattering: indeed, he contributed to the consolidation of some Heidegger's Führer-like traits.

Despite the best efforts of Arendt, Jaspers, Marcuse, Habermas, and others, Heidegger's long-awaited repentance never came; on the contrary, he tried to pass off as reality the exact opposite (e.g., pretending his rectoral speech was an attempt to depoliticize the university).

⁵² Mironov and Mironova, "Filosof i vlast'," 24.

In their second article, the Mironovs insist that Heidegger was not simply drawn by some outside force into the “murky tide of the Nazi movement” (as his defenders often claim), but entered in with dedication, fervor, and enthusiasm. The *Black Notebooks* gave a decisive answer to the question of “how closely his ideological passages were linked to the meaning of his philosophy and whether this link has survived the collapse of Nazism.”⁵³ Heidegger himself believed that, having resigned from the rectorate, he remained on the invisible front of “secret spiritual Germany”:

Analyzing Heidegger’s speeches, we see an amalgamation of philosophy and ideology, where fundamental philosophical ideas are rhetorically simplified and camouflaged as the expectations of the masses and the will of the state [...]. We have before us the work of a brilliant ideologist, which can be admired and, at the same time, feared by the insidiousness of the human mind. [...] The philosopher turned ideologist must not simply surrender to Power, but love it, and thus love the particular person (the tyrant, the despot) who is the personification of Power. This kind of love renders a person defenseless before the tyrant and condemns him to ruin, whether physically, morally, or intellectually. Inevitably there is a “reversal”: it is not the tyrant who acts as a means for the philosopher to achieve great goals, but, on the contrary, the philosopher helps to realize the tyrant’s goals. The process of breaking the “love” relationship with power (if it is possible at all) turns out to be difficult and may end tragically or tragicomically for the thinker.⁵⁴

The *Black Notebooks* Translated: Apologists...

In 2016 (a year after the Italian translation, the same year as the English one, and two years before the French one), the publishing wing of the Gaidar Institute in Moscow began to publish a Russian translation of the *Black Notebooks*. The fourth volume has been published in September 2022. Their translator is Alexey B. Grigoryev (who translated Victor Klemperer’s *LTI: Lingua Tertii Imperii*, among other things).⁵⁵ From 2016 onward, therefore, the discussion about the *Black Notebooks* began to be based on these Russian translations.

In the debates of recent years, which have focused on the political dimension of Heidegger’s doctrine and practice, **Alexander Mikhailovsky**, assistant professor at the Higher School of Economics, has proved to be the most active of the *apologists*. Known for his orthodox-conservative views, he has long demonstrated an inability (or unwillingness) to maintain the distance required for research: over the years he has translated Ernst Jünger, has invariably written about him with a sort of neophyte enthusiasm (Mikhailovsky remains an ardent devotee of the German “Conservative Revolution”). Such a self-dissolution in the material under study is

⁵³ Mironov and Mironova, “Ein Knabe, der träumt,” 164.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 176-177.

⁵⁵ Disclaimer: I serve as the scholarly editor of their translation, and in that sense I cover the debate concerning them, in a certain degree, *pro domo*.

elevated to a kind of method; after all, criticism is the lot of rationalism and the Modernity, and must therefore be rejected as such. This elimination of any research distance is manifested, in particular, in the more or less transparent application of Heideggerian motifs to his own demarche (e.g., he believes that Russians suffered most in World War II, a simple remake of Heidegger's famous justification for not being particularly interested in the fate of Jews, namely that it was the Germans who made the greatest sacrifices in the war).

For purely tactical (if not institutional) reasons, Mikhailovsky respectfully expresses his agreement with Motroshilova and the Mironovs, even though he interprets Heidegger completely differently. He himself articulates only one point of fundamental divergence: that they draw on the *German* Heideggerian debate, which is hopelessly distorted and corrupted by "German guilt," whereas he, following Bibikhin, draws on the *French* one, which, thank God, is free from such a guilt complex.

Mikhailovsky talks in an extremely arrogant manner about Western and, above all, German debates, believing that they demonstrate the impotence and decline of Western Heidegger studies. Fortunately, Russia presents a salutary alternative: it is here that all the conditions for genuine understanding of the great thinker's message are provided. In this, it is easy to see a Russian transposition of Heidegger's famous assertion that it is the Germans (and not the Latin-spoiled Romance nations) who are predisposed to an authentic understanding of the ancient Greeks (and thus of Being itself).

Two motifs in particular stand out in Mikhailovsky's treatment of Heidegger in general and of the *Black Notebooks* in particular: future and silence. Heidegger wrote for the future, so it is perfectly normal that he is not understood today. But we need to prepare ourselves—or our descendants—to understand him someday (this is an obvious variation on the theme of "New Beginning" that will open a new era of Return to Being, the prerequisite for which is a better understanding of Heidegger himself). Such preparation consists first of all in silence (this implies that a *debate* around the *Black Notebooks* is the worst way to understand them; we need not discuss, but remain silent, to "silence the truth"). Mikhailovsky seriously considers silence to be the basis of Heidegger's thought.⁵⁶

Reacting to the recent debate on political Heidegger, Mikhailovsky quite predictably considers it superficial and unnecessary. It concerns the sphere of the ontic, whereas we should descend *ad profundis* into the ontological. It is not Heidegger's political or other engagement (nor his personality at all) that should be dealt with, but Heidegger's work, i.e., Thought itself.⁵⁷ It is easy

⁵⁶ Aleksandr Mikhailovskii, "Khaidegger budushchego i budushchee Khaideggera," *Horizon* 7, no. 2 (2018): 337-364, 340.

⁵⁷ Similarly, we read in Mikhail Bogatov that Heidegger "does not need any defense, because what few of Heidegger's supporters defend is not attacked: those who attack with the arguments 'he is anti-Semitic and fascist' are simply unaware of the existence of another dimension in Heidegger's work. And second, those who do know about him are well aware that philosophy needs no defense" (Mikhail Bogatov, "Belyi shum," 2016, published on a e-site gifter.ru actually suspended). The author continues this motif by presenting

to recognize here the reproduction of Heidegger's own rebuke of phenomenology: one should deal not with phenomenology, but with *what* phenomenology deals with (things, phenomena). For Mikhailovsky, separating the political aspect of Heidegger's thinking is wrong: the sign of great thinking is that it is all one piece. Thus, one cannot simply consider Heidegger's Nazism a mistake and reject it; everything in his doctrine is important, well-thought-out, and interconnected. In some contradiction with the thesis that *everything* in Heidegger's doctrine is important, Mikhailovsky admits that, for him, the most important of Heidegger's texts come from the esoteric period of the 1930-1940s: *Beiträge, Besinnung*, and of course the *Black Notebooks*.⁵⁸

Mikhailovsky's commentary on the commencement of translation of the *Black Notebooks* is symptomatic:

The second volume of the *Black Notebooks* ("Reflections VII-XI"), covering the years 1938-39, was recently published in Russian. The translation is done with diligence in literary respect. However, the publication itself is a complete oddity. First, neither the translator, nor the editor, nor the sponsor—no one—considered it necessary to provide the Russian translation with a foreword or an afterword.⁵⁹ One could, of course, say: let Heidegger himself speak. But this is an esoteric text, or rather, a text addressed to the readers of the future, perhaps to the Russian readers of the future. And this is where explanations are needed. Without them, Heidegger's voice is simply drowned out in the journalistic noise. Secondly, the book was published by the Gaidar Publishing House. Can you imagine that? Where is Heidegger and where is Gaidar?⁶⁰ And here they end up together. Now the team that makes these translations and threatens to publish one after another all the volumes of the *Black Notebooks* is preparing a Heidegger issue of the journal *Logos*. Judging by the announcement, it is an attempt to import the discussion of Heidegger's National Socialism and anti-Semitism, already almost completed in Europe, onto Russian intellectual soil. The result of this policy of the Russian publishers is easy to foresee: it will be another reduction of Heidegger's thought to the well-known story of political history, the fixing of the German thinker in the German past of eighty years ago and a fatal refusal to use the opportunity he discovered to move to a New Beginning of thinking. [...] In no way should Heidegger be fixed in the past, in the history of the Holocaust and other things that

authentic Heidegger supporters as a tiny minority who are opposed by the crowd of critics, as prefigured by Heidegger himself in his "das Man."

⁵⁸ See Nestor Pilawski, "Martin Khaidegger i budushchee: pochemu u tekhniki ne tekhnicheskaiia sushchnost' i zachem nuzhna poeziia v XXI veke?" February 20, 2021, <https://syg.ma/@nestor-pilawski/martin-khaidieghghier-i-budushchieie-pochiemu-u-tiekhniki-nie-tiekhnichieskaia-sushchnost-i-zachiem-nuzhna-poeziia-v-xxi-viekie>.

⁵⁹ This extravagant rebuke, of course, ignores Klostermann's probable attitude toward such an idea (if it had even arisen).

⁶⁰ Yegor Gaidar (1956-2009) was a Russian economist and politician. He is considered the intellectual mastermind of many of Russia's liberal political and economic reforms of the early 1990s.

are painful for Westerners but not for Russian intellectuals. Why should you involve yourself in the induction of traumas from which your history has kept you safe? Heidegger has other passages more relevant for us.⁶¹

The pro-Dugin website katehon.com published a review of this volume of the *Black Notebooks* by the orthodox nationalist and monarchist Vladimir Karpets (1954-2017). However, the thematic and verbatim coincidences with Mikhailovsky's text prevent it from being seen as quite independent of Mikhailovsky (who praised it highly). We read in it:

Current Russian Heidegger scholarship is the least prepared to immerse itself in silence in order to better understand the thinker. And in this sense, the translation that has just come out and everything that revolves around it is extremely far from the spirit of "benign silence." The translation itself is certainly better than "Bibikhin's fantasies"; at least it is more or less rigorous. However, it also, like the vast majority of translations, misses the main point. Heidegger's thought is so connected with language that a detailed explanation and interpretation (up to and including hermeneutic) of the terminology and grammatical forms of the philosopher's statement is much more important (only Professor Alexander Dugin practices this today in his trilogy on Heidegger). Compared to Dugin's interpretation, Grigoriev's translation is "mediocre," but in some respects (for example, in its unpretentiousness) it is acceptable. But the translation is not the point here.⁶²

We see then that Mikhailovsky is ready engage the fraud philosopher Alexander Dugin as a commentator or even to follow him as a role model.

Another Heidegger scholar, **Yegor Falyov**, Assistant Professor at Moscow State University, has been mainly working on the hermeneutics in Heidegger. He begins his article by objecting to any political trial of the thinker, but at the end of the article, he himself offers a kind of assize discussing common accusations against Heidegger:

History shows that any political trial of a philosopher eventually turns against the judges. Political realities change, the norms of political correctness change, and all political accusations sooner or later lose their meaning, while philosophy retains its significance. The judgment that a philosopher deserves is a philosophical judgment. It must be a judgment *sub specie aeternitatis*, from the point of view of eternity. This judgment must ascertain whether Heidegger's philosophy has some

⁶¹ Aleksandr Chantsev, "Aleksandr Mikhailovskii: Nashe vremia Ernst Iunger nazyvaet 'mezhdutsarstviem,'" *Peremeny (blog)*, May 22, 2018, <https://www.peremeny.ru/blog/22167>.

⁶² Vladimir Karpets, "Vokrug 'chernykh tetradei,'" *Katehon*, December 16, 2016, <https://katehon.com/ru/article/vokrug-chernyh-tetradey>.

content of enduring significance, some contribution to the age-old work of human thought.⁶³

Just like Mikhailovsky, Falyov is convinced that humanity is not yet mature enough to understand Heidegger (as Heidegger himself foresaw).⁶⁴ He consistently downplays the problem: no one ever became a Nazi by reading Heidegger. He also regrets that Heidegger's version of National Socialism failed to win:

Had the Nazis been attracted to Heidegger's idea of the "spiritual National Socialism," they would have been on the road to recovery from their mass mental derangement. [...] Most important is the fact that real National Socialism, with all its horrors, was made possible not at all by a "turn to the soil," but by a lack of reflection. Despite the use of Nazi terminology, objectively Heidegger resisted that vulgar form of Nazism in the only way a thinker can most effectively resist it: through comprehension. If historically real National Socialism had been able to embrace the meanings that Heidegger was proposing, it would already have been a very different historical phenomenon, and there would have been no concentration camps or gas chambers.⁶⁵

Unlike Mikhailovsky, who praises the *Black Notebooks* as a collection of Heidegger's hidden, most genuine thoughts, Falyov sees them as "buckstone," in which gold, though found, is extremely rare. The *Black Notebooks* neither add value to nor remove it from Heidegger's thought. The mistake the critics make, according to Falyov, is to underestimate the properly philosophical approach in Heidegger, for whom the political was never primary, but always a means:

At a time when the rhetoric of National Socialism was obligatory, Heidegger used "National Socialism" and its terminology to embed his program of "overcoming metaphysics". [...] Indeed, in Heidegger's history of Being, the figure of a "leader" is central, and he at first hoped that Adolf Hitler could play the role of such a leader. But anyone who understands Heidegger's philosophical language (or, if you prefer, his "jargon") will easily see that Heidegger forms his own notion of a kind of ideal "Führer," a "leader" who has virtually nothing in common with the real Adolf Hitler.⁶⁶

⁶³ Yegor Falyov, "'Chernye tetradi' i novyi vitok sudov nad Khaideggerom," *Filosofskoe obrazovanie* 2 (34) (2016): 35–45, 35.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 36, 39.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 38.

Falyov considers it possible to regard Heidegger's political views as erroneous and even to develop an "ethics of not reading Heidegger,"⁶⁷ or at least of selective reading. Still, it would be absurd to pass judgment as to whether or not someone is a great philosopher on political grounds.

Philosopher **Anatoly Ryassov** takes a more hesitant stance, considering such hesitation preferable to unequivocal condemnation or equally unequivocal justification. He believes the main question to be: How do the *Black Notebooks* manage to combine acrimonious remarks about the "Christian-pagan cathedral of organized Wagnerianism" erected by the Nazis with arguments about the Jewish essence of psychoanalysis and sociology? It might have seemed that Modernity could be fundamentally criticized without specifying a national character. But no, Heidegger insists on "Jewishness" in rare but unreducible references, and this turns out to be an intractable ideological surplus.

Ryassov refers to the theory of ideology of Althusser, who wrote that ideology is often expressed not explicitly, but as a negative imprint. Anti-Semitism, which Heidegger paradoxically links to the ideas of pan-Germanism (including its Hitlerian modification), appears as such a negative imprint in the *Black Notebooks*, for example in those passages in which National Socialist policy is declared the apotheosis of Modern thought.

Heidegger alternately pinned his hopes of overcoming Modernity on National-Socialism and declared the latter the culmination of European nihilism (or else tried to link these two mutually exclusive views). Sympathies for the young Nazi ideology came into conflict with Heidegger's emerging philosophy of technology, and he was prepared to make the riskiest generalizations in order to maintain the different poles of his own thoughts. But much more important is the fact that the *Black Notebooks*, unpublished during the author's lifetime, represent years of reflection on these opposites; moreover, they are a constant reflection on the situation of aporia as a necessary foundation of philosophy. Ironically, in Heidegger's biography it will not be hard to find examples of (supposedly Jewish) "calculus" and a focus on "success," and his rectorate is not the only episode of this kind.

Ryassov sees one of the keys to understanding the *Black Notebooks* in the fact of Heidegger's immersion in working on Nietzsche, who often saw delusions as epiphanies. Hence Heidegger writes bluntly, "the depth of a philosophy is measured by its capacity to go astray. And since delusion can never be conscious and deliberate, but springs from the dragging stream of Being itself and is inevitable, the power of delusion inherent in thinking says something about the closeness of thinking to Being."

In a sense, the *Black Notebooks* are, in Ryassov's eyes, a confession—and a demonstration of the fact—that many of the works that defined the context of European philosophy in the second half of the 20th century came at the cost of a breakdown into ideology.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ This phrase is by Adam Knowles, "Heidegger's Mask: Silence, Politics and the Banality of Evil in the Black Notebooks," *Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual* 5 (2015): 93–117.

⁶⁸ Anatoly Ryassov, "Khaidegger, strast' k zabluzhdeniiu i budushchee," *Neprikosnovennyi zapas* 129 (2020).

... and Critics

There are also more blatantly critical voices. In 2018 the journal *Logos* devoted a special issue to the “Heidegger affair.” Here, the *Black Notebooks* act as both an occasion and as new material, forcing a revision of previous interpretations. **Alexey Glukhov** considers for instance impossible to deny the “new clarity”: Heidegger *was* one of the leading thinkers of the National Socialist revolution; His thinking was political not superficially but essentially; Heidegger joined the party not accidentally or only for career reasons, but quite consciously and zealously; the rectoral episode was by no means an accident of his biography. Only narrow Heideggerian specialists, Glukhov considers, are of the old persuasion that philosophy and politics belong to different subject areas. On the contrary, Heidegger shows remarkable consistency in distinguishing between a “vulgar” and an “authentic-being” understanding of the political. Heidegger thought of himself as Führer-equal, and thus completely free of vulgar ideology. The axiom of the liberal approach was the demand for the isolation of the political. Heidegger himself was opposed to the liberal theory, to the tolerant urban culture, and to a cosmopolitan way of life, so his own vision of political reality was exactly the opposite. The conditions for reading Heidegger’s texts that some apologists put forward (e.g., the demand to separate Heidegger’s philosophical thought from his political engagement) are based on a typically liberal strategy of isolating politics from other spheres of life. The resulting liberal interpretation would never have been accepted by Heidegger himself.

Glukhov finds an instructive parallel between the way Bibikhin (as an exemplary Heideggerian) sacrifices his own thought and voice in favor of Heidegger (on the pretext that his thought is the Thought in general) and the way Heidegger himself, in a somewhat tragic manner, did not sufficiently divorce his voice-thought from Hitler’s. Nevertheless, we have to admit that it is Hitler’s voice that provides the most adequate frame for Heidegger’s interpretation of what the philosopher himself blessed. He had great grievances against Hitler, but he addresses the charge of *betrayal* of Thought only to the post-war administration that fired him from the university. His career under the Nazis was not the best, but neither the war they unleashed nor the massacres they committed gave him cause to accuse them of betraying Thought.⁶⁹

In his article⁷⁰ (and even more so in his book), **Dmitry Kralechkin** consciously and performatively breaks with the purely political discussion of Heidegger's case — what he calls the “cyclical dispute of politicization vs. authenticity”⁷¹ — to embed Heidegger instead in a broad context of Modernism and place him alongside prominent modernist figures of knowledge and writing: Alexander von Humboldt, Darwin, Pound, Kafka, Proust, Mallarmé...⁷² The theorization of “Machenschaft” becomes a mere derivative of the general fascination with conspiracies and the detective genre peculiar to the turn of the century.⁷³ Heidegger himself, who blurs the specificity of the Modernity

⁶⁹ Alexey Glukhov, “Filosofskaia iasnost’: Khaidegger ravno Gitler,” *Logos* 28, no. 3 (2018): 91-120, 104-109.

⁷⁰ Dmitry Kralechkin, “Khaidegger: zagovor protiv real’nosti,” *Logos* 28, no. 3 (2018): 27-50.

⁷¹ Dmitry Kralechkin, *Nenadezhnoe bytie. Khaidegger i modernizm* (Moscow: Gaidar Institute, 2020), 32.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 188 ff.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 208 ff.

by extending the modernist “Fall from grace” to all ages, from the Presocratics to the neo-Kantians, becomes a typical representative of the characteristic modernist figure of the “unreliable narrator,”⁷⁴ who breaks with the unity of individual subjectivity and, in particular, forces a rethinking of the so-called inner contradictions in the author. Thus, in Heidegger the treatment of Dasein as an individual is rejected as (too) ontic, but he operates with the notions of “Germans,” “Jews,” and “Communists,” whose explicit onticity does not bother him at all (their belonging to common places, to “das Gerede,” “das Man,” however, is obvious).

At the request of the editors of the philosophical journal *Horizon*, phenomenologist **Ilya Inishev** commented on Mikhailovsky’s program article on the “Russian tradition of Heideggerianism” in connection with the *Black Notebooks*. According to the commentator, the article presents mainly a rhetorical posture instead of an argumentative position; thus, it brings possible stances to the opposition between “benign silence” and irrelevant discussion of Heidegger. Inishev formulates the leitmotif of Mikhailovsky’s article as follows:

Heidegger does not fit into the Western philosophical (and, moreover, scientific) culture of today, and therefore the “Orthodox-Patriotic movement” that developed in Russia at the end of the last century forms precisely the very slot that connects Heidegger, rejected by Western philosophical culture, to his future.⁷⁵

Both theses seem absurd to him: on the one hand, Heidegger is deeply integrated into the Western intellectual context; on the other hand, one cannot speak of a failure of Western Heideggerian studies:⁷⁶ the global reception of Heidegger is occurring without significant Russian participation in quantitative or qualitative terms.

Mikhailovsky insists on the monolithic nature of Heidegger’s doctrine, believing that this prohibits highlighting and analyzing its political dimension. Thus, in Inishev’s view, he

attempts to smuggle the compromised political dimension of Heidegger’s legacy out of the public discussion. However, beyond this framework and under the conditions shaped by the Russian interpretive and translational regime, Heidegger’s heritage is easily appropriated by (ultra)conservative thinking.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Ibid., 18.

⁷⁵ Ilya Inishev, “Khaidegger i rossiiskoe filosofstvovanie: produktivnost’ distantsii,” *Horizon* 7, no. 2 (2018): 546-553, 550.

⁷⁶ The debate on the *Black Notebooks* proves “the premature end and rapid downsizing of Heideggerian studies in the West” (Aleksandr Mikhailovskii, “O nekotorykh osobennostiakh rossiiskoi retseptsii filosofii Martina Khaideggera v sviazi s diskussiei vokrug ‘Chernykh tetradei,’” *Vestnik Samarskoi gumanitarnoi akademii. Seriia “Filosofia. Filologiya”* 21, no. 1 (2017): 54-71, 57.

⁷⁷ Inishev, “Khaidegger i rossiiskoe filosofstvovanie,” 552-553.

As we can see, there is an opposition between admirers⁷⁸ and critics of Heidegger in the Russian debate, similar to that which exists in the Western discussion. But the Russian debate also contains another, unrelated point of bifurcation. Some interpreters profess a holistic approach and demand to see Heidegger's philosophy as an indivisible whole that can and should only be understood as such; others, on the contrary, believe that it is heterogeneous and, in places, contradictory, and therefore allow for a combination of "good philosophy" and "bad politics."

This (of course simplified) scheme logically yields four types of configurations. "Holistic critics" (like, say, Emmanuel Faye, whose seminal work *Heidegger: The Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy* has been translated in Russian in 2021⁷⁹) are rather rare in the Russian context (however, see Alexey Glukhov above). In general, few, including virulent critics, cast doubt on the importance of Heidegger's contribution to 20th-century philosophical achievement⁸⁰.

⁷⁸ Russian admirers of Heidegger share a position with their German and French counterparts that can be summarized as follows: everything we needed to know about Heidegger's political engagement, we have known for some time. Among other formulas of this stance, see Jacques Derrida: "Pour l'essentiel des 'faits', je n'ai encore rien trouvé dans cette enquête qui ne fût connu, depuis longtemps, de ceux qui s'intéressent sérieusement à Heidegger." Jacques Derrida, "Heidegger: l'enfer des philosophes," in *Points de suspension* (Paris: Galilée, 1992), 193.

⁷⁹ Faj E. *Khaidegger, vvedenie nacizma v filosofiju. Na materiale seminarov 1933-1935 gg.* Moscow: ID Delo RANKhGS, 2021.

⁸⁰ In this, they diverge from Emmanuel Faye's famous position, to which, of course, Heidegger's scholars (even those highly critical of him) in France and elsewhere have also reacted in very different ways. It seems to me that the root of these divergences lies not in the attitude toward Heidegger, but toward philosophy. Faye believes that to be considered a philosopher (let alone a "great philosopher") one must pass some kind of moral examination, for philosophy itself is a highly moral enterprise. But it obscures and brackets philosophy's relations with power and politics in general and renders it virtually impossible to analyze them.

Heidegger, *Völkisch* but Not Nazi? A Manipulation by Alexander Dugin

Emmanuel Faye

"Heidegger, sehr gut!"
A Gestapo officer to Jean Wahl in 1941⁸¹

How should we read Martin Heidegger today? Since the publication in 2005 of my book *Heidegger: The Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy*,⁸² which allowed us to get to know the philosopher's unpublished Hitlerian seminars, Heidegger's defenders have generally paid less attention to the 500 pages of my analysis than to a sentence in the conclusion, where I wrote that "such a work cannot continue to be placed in the philosophy section of libraries; rather, its place is in the historical archives of Nazism and Hitlerism."⁸³ The Heideggerians were quite happy to cry censorship and book burning. They were careful not to acknowledge that I had written on the very same page that these questions called for more in-depth research and debate. To further clarify my position, I shortly thereafter published an article in *Le Monde* entitled "For the Opening of the Heidegger Archives,"⁸⁴ which was later transformed into a petition.

While the aforementioned sentence might have appeared provocative to academics used to reading Heidegger as a new Aristotle or a new Kant, it was the logical conclusion to be drawn from reading the many texts that I cited and analyzed in my book. This conclusion also implied—and this is what interests us today—that it is through an understanding of how Heidegger has been interpreted by such radical ideologists as Ahmad Fardid in Iran, Dominique Venner and Alain de Benoist in France, or Alexander Dugin in Russia, who have taken their bearings from his fundamental positions, that he can be best understood.

⁸¹ Barbara Wahl, ed., "Interview Jean Wahl par Pierre Boutang (extrait) sur la période 1941-1945," n.d., https://www.academia.edu/38225897/Interview_Jean_Wahl_par_Pierre_Boutang_extrait_sur_la_p%C3%A9riode_1941_1945_doc.

⁸² Emmanuel Faye, *Heidegger, l'introduction du nazisme dans la philosophie. Autour des séminaires inédits de 1933-1935* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2005). The book has been translated into 7 languages, including English in 2009 and Russian in 2021. A Chinese translation is forthcoming.

⁸³ Emmanuel Faye, *Heidegger: The Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy in Light of the Unpublished Seminars of 1933-1935*, trans. Michael B. Smith (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2009), 319.

⁸⁴ Emmanuel Faye, "Pour l'ouverture des archives Heidegger," *Le Monde*, January 4, 2006, https://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2006/01/04/pour-l-ouverture-des-archives-heidegger-par-emmanuel-faye_727243_3232.html.

If, by contrast, one sticks to the euphemistic and decontextualized paraphrases of the academic Heideggerians, one cannot discern the *völkisch* substructure of his thought, nor understand how he was able to make such virulent statements as his call, in the winter of 1933-1934, for the total annihilation (*völligen Vernichtung*) of the inner enemy embedded in the roots of the people.

In 2008, Victor Fárias published a second book in Italy, written in a somewhat haphazard and hurried manner, without a bibliography or index, but, in terms of its subject matter, undoubtedly as important as his first work. It is entitled *Heidegger's Legacy in Neo-Nazism, Fascism and Islamic Fundamentalism*.⁸⁵ The book was also published in Spanish in 2010.⁸⁶ It has not been published in English or German. I instigated its translation into French, but the publishers—François-Xavier de Guibert and then Desclee de Brouwer, who bought the François-Xavier de Guibert publishing house—gave up on publishing the book after having had it translated. It is difficult to grasp today, following the publication of the *Black Notebooks* and the worldwide scandal that this caused, the extent to which the theme of Fárias' second book could not be accepted in France. The importance of Fárias' critical text is that it shows a thought that is intimately related not only to past National Socialism, but also to neo-Nazism and other extant political or politico-religious currents.

This book by Fárias, which followed my critique, helped to prompt a profound rethinking on the part of Italy's leading Heideggerian, Franco Volpi. After Volpi's critical introduction to the Spanish translation of the *Contributions to Philosophy* was censored by Heidegger's son, Hermann, the philosopher delivered a lecture in Santiago, Chile, in 2008 entitled "Good Bye, Heidegger!"⁸⁷ Of particular interest is the section of this censored preface entitled "Shipwreck in the Sea of Being," which Volpi addresses at the end of his lecture (which was published only in 2017). Volpi expresses amazement at the "slavish admiration" that Heidegger was able to elicit, and he considers *Contributions to Philosophy*, which dates from 1936-1938, to be the logbook of a real shipwreck.

Even as Franco Volpi—a traditional academic Heideggerian, but one with a critical mind—was distancing himself from Heidegger, the radical ideologist Alexander Dugin was, by contrast, translating and writing books about him. Did the same causes produce opposite effects in different minds? After all, what discouraged Volpi—namely the radical nature of Heideggerian Nazism and its considerable impact on neo-Nazi movements—could only arouse the interest of a mind like Dugin's. I therefore propose today to return to Alexander Dugin's reading of Heidegger in order to evaluate its accuracy and the ideological function it serves.

⁸⁵ Victor Fárias, *L'eredità di Heidegger nel neonazismo, nel fascismo e nel fondamentalismo islamico* (Milan: Medusa, 2008).

⁸⁶ Victor Fárias, *Heidegger y su herencia. Los neonazis, el neofascismo y el fundamentalismo islámico* (Madrid: Tecnos, 2010).

⁸⁷ Franco Volpi, "Good Bye, Heidegger! Mi introducción censurada a los *Beiträge zur philosophie*," *Konvergencias, Filosofía y Culturas en dialog* 25 (October 2017), <http://www.konvergencias.net/francovolpi25.pdf>.

Dugin was especially interested in Heidegger's writings from the second half of the 1930s, in particular *Contributions to Philosophy* (1936-1938) and *The History of Beyng* (1938-1940). These collections bring together fragments edited with the help of Heidegger's brother, Fritz and published posthumously, at the end of the 20th century, in his *Complete Works*. It is therefore necessary to understand the reasons for Dugin's particular interest in the writings of this period—and to do this, we must begin by understanding the moment in Heideggerian thought to which these texts correspond.

Metapolitics and Philosophy: The Opportunistic Strategies of Martin Heidegger

In the intellectual and ideological fields that he crossed and managed to capture for his own benefit, Martin Heidegger must be recognized as having an extraordinary capacity, that of a strategist. Throughout the 1920s, he assumed a contradiction: he owed the advancement of his academic career, in Marburg and then in Freiburg, to his master, Edmund Husserl, yet privately affirmed in 1923, in his correspondence with Karl Löwith, that "never in his life, not even for a second, was Husserl a philosopher."⁸⁸ Heidegger also shows a form of intellectual sterility that may seem contradictory in an author whose complete work today comprises more than 100 volumes—albeit composed essentially of material from his courses and seminars, conferences, and scattered notes.

In fact, we note his difficulty in composing an outstanding work. In order to obtain his position at the University of Marburg in 1923, Heidegger produced only a short, rather obscure manuscript entitled *Interpretations of Aristotle (An Indication of the Hermeneutical Situation)* and owed his promotion to the Jewish origin of his competition, the Hegelian philosopher Richard Kroner, author of the two-volume work *From Kant to Hegel*; to the support of Paul Natorp and of a Husserl who was not very perceptive about the intentions of his alleged disciple; and to the fact that several professors had rallied behind *völkisch* positions and did not want any Jewish philosophers on the faculty in Marburg. Heidegger confided as much to Jaspers three years later: "part of the faculty has one principle: not a Jew and as far as possible a German national."⁸⁹

It was his love affair with his student Hannah Arendt, 17 years his junior, that gave him the energy to compose, in 1925, the *Cassel Lectures* from which he drew the manuscript of *Being and Time*. In his letter of April 25, 1925, to Arendt, he emphasizes "what is happening in my work thanks to your love."⁹⁰ He draws in some way on Arendt's psyche and the reading of her Diary, which the young student entrusted to him; in particular, the text "Shadows" (*Schatten*), an Arendtian experience of anxiety and anguish in the face of existence, is transposed in §40 of his book, which is entitled "The Fundamental Attunement of Anxiety as an Eminent Disclosedness of Dasein".

⁸⁸ Martin Heidegger, Karl Löwith, *Correspondance 1919-1973*, Translated by J. Goesser Assaiante, S. Montgomery Ewegen (London-New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2021), 63.

⁸⁹ Martin Heidegger, *Correspondance avec Karl Jaspers* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), 60.

⁹⁰ Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger, *Lettres et autres documents 1925-1975* (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), 31.

Being and Time remains, however, an unfinished work. Of the two projected parts, only two-thirds of the first part has ever been published—that is, one-third of the projected whole. This incompleteness is the expression not only of powerlessness, but of a deliberate strategy. In order to reach his goal—to accede to Husserl’s chair as *ordinarius*—Heidegger could not make public too soon the content of his thought. He opened up about this to the Nazi raciologist Ludwig F. Clauss, who reported the following confidence of Heidegger after 1945: “What I think, I will say when I am *ordinarius*.”⁹¹

Since I cannot give a detailed account of Heidegger’s position here,⁹² I will simply provide the following overview: far from *Contributions to Philosophy* constituting a “turning point” (*Kehre*), his thought therein displays significant continuity from *Being and Time* in 1927. In a gradual and progressive way, he exposes his basic conception of the *völkisch Dasein*—two terms so heavy with meaning and with such connotations in Heideggerian thought that they are exceedingly difficult to translate.

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger substitutes the categories—the organizing concepts of thought and experience—in the philosophies of Aristotle and Kant for the *existentials* presented as the modes of being of the *Dasein*. The question “What is?” is replaced by the question “Who?”

Moreover, against the neo-Kantian readings of Kant, led primarily by philosophers of Jewish origin like Hermann Cohen and Ernst Cassirer—who, according to Heidegger, interpret the critical philosophy of Kant as a theory of knowledge—he sought in 1929, in *Kant and the Problem of the Metaphysics*, to promote, supposedly from Kant, a “metaphysics of the *Dasein*.” This metaphysics, barely sketched at the end of the book, is taken up again in a March 19, 1933, letter to his wife Elfride as the “metaphysics of the *German Dasein*.”

In the *Black Notebooks* and in a whole series of recently published fragments, he then tests a new concept: Metapolitics. In the second of the published *Notebooks*, which corresponds to the period of his rectorate at the University of Freiburg, we find three occurrences of the term. First, a striking declaration: “The end of ‘philosophy’. - We must lead it to its end and so prepare the other one—Metapolitics.” Further on, a brief note: “Metaphysics as meta-politics.” Finally, a more explicit development: “The Metaphysics of the *Dasein* must deepen and widen according to its most intimate structure to the metapolitics ‘of the’ historical people.”

This reformulation of the metaphysics of the *Dasein* as metapolitics of the Germanic people corresponds not to a transformation of meaning, but to the explicitation of the “most intimate structure” of this so-called “metaphysics”—a structure according to which *Dasein* designates not the human person but the Germanic people, understood as the historical people. Heidegger also

⁹¹ Volker Böhnigk, *Kulturanthropologie als Rassenlehre. Nationalsozialistische Kulturphilosophie aus der Sicht des Philosophen Erich Rothacker* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2002), 131.

⁹² See Emmanuel Faye, *Arendt et Heidegger. De la destruction dans la pensée*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Albin Michel, 2020), ch. 6, 239-265.

formulates in this regard, as early as 1933, a theme that will become dominant following the military defeat of the Third Reich, that of the “end of philosophy,” on which the *Letter on Humanism* concludes.

There is thus both an affirmed continuity and an apparent rupture. An affirmed continuity, because to speak of the metapolitics of the people is to assume that the *Dasein* that we have been talking about since *Being and Time* is, in its “most intimate structure,” not individual but communitarian and *völkisch*. An apparent rupture, because it is a question of replacing the “philosophy” with the “all other.” Earlier in his *Notebooks*, Heidegger abruptly stated, “Should philosophy still be? End!”

It is therefore this *völkisch* exclusivism that we must re-understand under the name of “metapolitics.” The shift from the “metaphysical” to the “metapolitical” marks the definitive leave given to the philosophical question “What is man?” still privileged by Kant, to give way to the foundation of the one and only “historical people” in its community of essence and its destiny, answering the question: “Who are we?”

In addition to the three occurrences in the *Reflections III*, we find the adjective “metapolitical” in the additional notes in the summer semester of 1933. This adjective is appended to the terms “history, polis, foundation” or “world, Dasein” and opposed to “cultural concerns” — “Geschichte, πόλις, metapolitisch, ‘Grund.’ Nicht: Kulturpflege und dergleichen, sondern Welt, Dasein.”⁹³

These notes contain several references to the *Reflections II*,⁹⁴ proof that the first *Black Notebooks* may have served as a reference or even as a matrix for some of the statements in Heidegger’s lectures. In *Complements and Snippets of Thought (Ergänzungen und Denksplitter)*, published this year in volume 91 of the complete works, we also find several developments on “Metaphysics as Metapolitics of the People.”⁹⁵ Heidegger then conceives of “philosophy as historical metapolitics,” which “connects, awakens, and builds upstream the state-*völklich* knowledge requirement.”⁹⁶ This *völklich* or even *völkisch* politicization of philosophy can be combined with a radical rejection of metaphysics and philosophy, as well as with their (at least verbal) recovery.

It is worth noting that Alexander Dugin has grasped the importance of the Heideggerian use of the term “metapolitics” in his early *Black Notebooks*. Dugin, in fact, chose to title his most recent published essay on Martin Heidegger, which appeared in 2016, *Metapolitics. Eschatological Being*.⁹⁷ This association of metapolitics with Heidegger's thought is all the more interesting since it is around this term that the New Right was reconstituted in Europe after 1945.

⁹³ Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Wahrheit*, GA 36/37 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2001), 274.

⁹⁴ Martin Heidegger, *Überlegungen II-VI (Schwarze Hefte 1931-1938)*, GA 94 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2014), 268, 270, 271.

⁹⁵ Martin Heidegger, *Ergänzungen und Denksplitter*, GA 91 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2022), 177.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 173.

⁹⁷ Alexander Dugin, *Martin Heidegger. Metapolitika. Eschatologičeskii Bytīia* (Moscow: Akademicheskii Proekt, 2016).

The recurrent use of the term “metapolitics” alongside or in place of the terms “metaphysics” and “philosophy,” characteristic of the years 1932-1934, is not repeated in the *Contributions to Philosophy* of the years 1936-1938. These terminological changes can be attributed not only to an internal evolution of Heidegger’s thought, but also to the evolution of the intellectual and political power relations between the different Nazi “philosophers” and the tendencies that each one represents.

In 1933, for example, he was close to another, equally radical National Socialist “philosopher,” Ernst Krieck. In May 1934, the rupture between the two philosophers—linked to internal oppositions between the two main Nazi student organizations, one close to Heidegger and Baeumler, the other to Krieck—was consummated. Krieck published a vitriolic attack in his journal *Volk im Werden* targeting Heidegger’s supposed “metaphysical nihilism,” which was said to have originated with the “Jewish literati.” It was at this time that Heidegger gave up talking about the “metaphysics of *Dasein*.”

At the same time, Baeumler and Heidegger, who had been very close in the early 1930s, drifted apart. Baeumler had rallied behind Alfred Rosenberg, while Heidegger had joined the Commission for the Philosophy of Law of Hans Franck’s Academy of German Law, where he could be seen sitting alongside Carl Schmitt and Alfred Rosenberg, which Baeumler or Krieck—who lacked the international recognition of Heidegger and, to a certain extent, Schmitt—were not invited to join. Nevertheless, there was no public and frank rupture between the two men. Heidegger did not contribute to Baeumler’s *Handbuch der Philosophie*, but the title of the *Beiträge zur Philosophie* is perhaps linked to the collaboration that was once envisaged.

In any case, the *Contributions to Philosophy* set forth the themes that comprise the Heideggerianism articulated by Alexander Dugin in his *Heidegger. The Philosophy of the Other Beginning*, published in Russian in 2010 and translated into English by Radix in 2014. After the first Greek beginning, Western thought would now access the “other beginning”⁹⁸ brought about by the German people. What was at stake for the *Da-sein* would depend on the “struggle between the earth and the world.”⁹⁹ This supposes to recognize that “all philosophy is the philosophy of a people.”¹⁰⁰

Let us therefore turn to examine how Dugin adapts these statements to his own doctrine.

Alexander Dugin’s *Völkisch*-but-Not-Nazi Heidegger: A Manipulation

Dugin’s ideological, intellectual, and political trajectory in the last decade of the 20th century is now fairly well-known. We know, thanks to the research of Marlene Laruelle and Anton Shekhovtsov, that he drew not only on the writings of the “traditionalists”—René Guénon, Julius

⁹⁸ Martin Heidegger, *Die Geschichte des Seyns*, GA 69, (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1999), 24, 30, etc.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 29-30.

Evola, etc.—but directly on National Socialist occultism and the esoteric and racist works of the Ahnenerbe.¹⁰¹ His close links to the European New Right, including its most Nazi-friendly elements (Jean Thiriart, Claudio Mutti, etc.), are also well documented.

It is later that the reference to Heidegger became central for Dugin. This moment, which mainly concerns the years 2010-2016, during which period Dugin published four books on Heidegger,¹⁰² is contemporary with his formulation of what he termed “The Fourth Political Dimension” (a term that also serves as the title of one of his books). It is therefore important to see how this dual project is articulated: the ambition to propose a new political theory, the “fourth dimension,” supposedly distinct from liberalism, communism, and also (less obviously) fascism; and the will to promote Heidegger, the thinker of the “new beginning,” as a reference, or even a model.

It is necessary for Dugin to distance Heidegger from historical National Socialism despite his radical Nazi commitment, which becomes abundantly clear from an examination of his writings. Following Armin Mohler, Dugin situates him, as well as Carl Schmitt, among the authors of the German “Conservative Revolution,” who, after supporting National Socialism for a short time, allegedly went into “internal exile.”¹⁰³

In his 2010 book, *Heidegger. The Philosophy of the Other Beginning*, Dugin all but completely ignores Heidegger’s thought and writings of the years 1928-1935. However, it is in his seminar of the winter of 1933-1934 that Heidegger clarifies his own concept of the political as the self-assertion of a people, in an openly Hitlerian and Nazi context. He shows how the will of the *Führer* sinks into the soul and the being of the people in order to bind the latter to the task through the bond of *eros*. It is during this same period that he reveals the exterminating and genocidal dimension of his thought when he enjoins his philosophy students to give themselves the long-term goal of preparing an assault with a view to the total annihilation of the internal enemy, which is embedded in the most intimate root of the people.

Obviously, Dugin neither discusses nor quotes such texts. He conveniently distinguishes three periods:

- (1) one that culminates in the 1927 publication of *Being and Time*;
- (2) the decade of 1936-1946, when Heidegger developed his conception of the history of being;

¹⁰¹ Marlene Laruelle, “Dangerous Liaisons: Eurasianism, the European Far Right and Putin’s Russia,” in *Eurasianism and the European Far Right*, ed. Marlene Laruelle (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015), 1-31, 7-9; Anton Shekhovtsov, “Alexander Dugin and the West European New Right, 1989-1994,” in *Eurasianism and the European Far Right*, ed. Marlene Laruelle (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015), 35-53, 40-41.

¹⁰² Alexander Dugin, *Martin Khaidegger. Filosofii drugogo nachala* (Moscow, Akademicheskii Proekt, 2010); Alexander Dugin, *Martin Khaidegger. Vozmozhnost’ russkoi filosofii* (Moscow: Akademicheskii Proekt, 2011); Alexander Dugin, *Martin Khaidegger. Poslednii bog* (Moscow: Akademicheskii Proekt, 2014); Dugin, *Martin Khaidegger. Metapolitika. Eskhatologiya Bytiia* (Moscow: Akademicheskii Proekt, 2016).

¹⁰³ Alexander Dugin, *La quatrième théorie politique. La Russie et les idées politiques du XXIème siècle*, avant-propos d’Alain Soral (Nantes: Ars Magna Édition, 2012); on the so-called “internal emigration” of Heidegger and Carl Schmitt, see also Alexander Dugin, *Martin Heidegger. The Philosophy of Another Beginning* (Washington: Radix, 2014), 26, 173.

(3) the post-war years, when he had to face all kinds of censorship phenomena that forced him to censor himself.

Dugin presents himself as the author who takes seriously and rehabilitates the middle period, mainly the years 1936-1940, when Heidegger wrote the fragments that comprise his *Contributions to Philosophy* as well as *The History of Being*. According to Dugin, this period would have been left unknown because Heidegger remained linked to National Socialism. It would not have been understood, in the words of Dugin, that during this middle period, “Heidegger is moved by the hope of transforming National Socialism into a profoundly philosophical phenomenon,” opening Western European civilization to the prospect of a “new beginning,” through the overcoming of the two ultimate forms of nihilism and “machination” or “manigance” (*Machenschaft*): Americanism and the Marxism of the Soviet Union.¹⁰⁴ From this perspective, the expected victory of Nazi Germany would have been closely linked to what Dugin calls a “philosophical operation.”

Dugin’s presentation of Heideggerian Nazism is quite curious in that it presupposes that a hypothetical Nazi victory would, if we consider it in Heidegger’s way, have been a major accomplishment. The ambivalence of Dugin’s relationship to Germany in general and to Nazism in particular is very evident in these pages. How can a Russian intellectual support such a position in view of what National Socialism was and the heroic efforts of the Soviet population to resist the military aggression of the Third Reich? Would the Heideggerian “new beginning” not have been built on the genocide not only of the European Jews, but also of the Slavic populations? How would it have differed from historical National Socialism?

In any case, Dugin’s tripartition allows him to almost completely obscure the writings of the years 1933-1935—the very years studied in my recently published book in Russian, and in which the radicality of Heidegger’s Hitlerism and political Nazism is most evident. There is an obvious intellectual manipulation here that shatters the potential credibility of Dugin’s argument.

This strategy, however, was challenged by the publication of the *Black Notebooks* from 2014, the same year that Dugin’s main work on Heidegger was released in English by Radix. Published in Heidegger’s *Gesamtausgabe* (collected writings), the *Black Notebooks* revealed, among other things, that Heideggerian anti-Semitism had never been so explicit and virulent as in the very late 1930s and early 1940s, when the National Socialists began to carry out their genocidal program of destroying the European Jews.

But let us return to the writings of the years 1936-1939 and to the core of what Dugin retains. It appears quite clearly in the *Contributions to Philosophy* that *Dasein*, in Heidegger’s mind, does not primarily designate individuals. *Dasein* is a term that serves to designate above all the mode of existence of a people. He goes so far as to speak of introducing a “*völkisch* principle” into being. We are thus witnessing a form of ontologization of *völkisch* and Nazi racialism.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 284.

It must be recognized that Dugin has perfectly understood the Heideggerian conception of *Dasein*, which has nothing individual about it, whereas “liberal” readings fail to perceive what is at stake in his writings. However, Dugin proposes a shift in Heidegger’s emphasis on the Germanic people, drawing on a key passage in the *History of Being*, which is partly contemporary with the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. Heidegger writes:

Every world opens and remains associated with a land. Each world and each land is thus historical in the whole of its belonging. [...] The history of the land of the future is contained in the essence of the not yet liberated russianness. The history of the world is entrusted to the meditation of the Germans.¹⁰⁵

In this essentialized and mythologized geopolitics, very much in the spirit of Dugin, Heidegger associates Germanness and Russianness: one is in charge of the “world,” or “heaven,” the other in charge of “earth.” On this basis, Dugin comes to endlessly gloss the new myth of the “Quadripartite” (*Geviert*), where heaven and earth, mortals and immortals intertwine. From this he derives a “cosmogeomachy,” which he emphasizes is an actual war, a fight.¹⁰⁶ In the long interview between Dugin and Heidegger’s last assistant, Friedrich Wilhelm von Herrmann, we see the Russian ideologue differentiate between what he calls the German *Dasein*, in charge of the sky, and the Russian *Dasein*, in charge of the earth.¹⁰⁷ And in several texts, he tries to show that these two *Dasein*, these two peoples—at the same time antagonistic and complementary—answer to various modalities of being, to different *existentials*. We have therefore with Dugin, as with Heidegger, a radical dynamiting of the principle of humanity, with all the murderous consequences that this can imply. The imprecatory violence with which Dugin expressed himself in 2014 and then in 2022 concerning Ukraine is quite similar to Heidegger’s most virulent statements in the years 1933-1934 and again in 1941-1942.

To what extent, however, can Dugin rely on Heidegger? Because of his theological background, and in particular the texts he produced in Marburg during his joint seminars with the Lutheran theologian Rudolph Bultmann, Heidegger is appreciated by political-religious fundamentalisms of all kinds. However, his anti-Christianism, no less virulent than his anti-Semitism, necessarily raises difficulties for an ideologue like Dugin, who is a supporter of Orthodox fundamentalism. As early as the opening of his 1933 summer semester lecture, Heidegger asserted that Christianity,

¹⁰⁵ “Jede Welt öffnet sich und bleibt zugefügt einer Erde. Jede Welt und jede Erde ist so im Ganzen ihres Zugehörigen geschichtlich. [...] Die Geschichte der Erde der Zukunft ist aufbehalten im noch nicht zu sich befreiten Wesen des Russentums. Die Geschichte der Welt ist aufgetragen der Besinnung der Deutschen.” (Martin Heidegger, *Logik als die Frage nach dem Wesen der Sprache*, SS 1934, GA 38 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1998), 108; Dugin, *Martin Heidegger. The Philosophy of Another Beginning*, 203. I have not adopted the English translation used in the American edition of Dugin’s book because it is translated from the Russian and not from the German original, from which it differs in several respects.)

¹⁰⁶ Dugin, *Martin Heidegger. The Philosophy of Another Beginning*, 205.

¹⁰⁷ “Prof. Dugin Interview mit Prof. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann,” YouTube video, 1:58:05, posted by “ARCTUR,” February 7, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b93z2yPo4pA>, accessed September 2, 2022.

as much as Romanity and Judaism, had “entirely altered and distorted the beginning philosophy, namely the Greek.”¹⁰⁸

Dugin is thus forced, in order to maintain the apparent coherence of his eclecticism, to dismiss Heideggerian antichristianity out of hand by explaining that his task is not to criticize Heidegger, but to understand him, which implies silencing critical judgments.¹⁰⁹ All that matters to him is to be able to present Heidegger’s “philosophy” as “a detailed requiem of European-Western philosophy”¹¹⁰ in order to show that the “other beginning” could only come from the East, from a mythologized Russianness. At the time of the Iranian revolution, Ahmed Fardid had not proceeded otherwise with Heidegger, seeing him as the prophet of the insurrection against the “Judeo-Masonic” disease of “Westernness.” Of course, Heidegger’s views on Christianity did not present the same problem of coherence for him as they do for Dugin. Curiously enough, Dugin refers positively to Henry Corbin, who introduced Heidegger to Iran, but he does not mention Fardid.

Michael Millerman’s Cunning Argumentation in Favor of Dugin’s Heidegger

I propose to turn now to a third figure, undoubtedly minor in comparison with the first two, but nevertheless not to be neglected. This is the Canadian political scientist Michael Millerman. For our purposes, he is interesting first of all for his direct relationship with Dugin, which led him to publish an interview with him on Heidegger in 2015, one year after the publication of the first volumes of the *Black Notebooks*. In it, Dugin presents his *Fourth Political Theory* as the development of a “meta-political sketch” that is found in Heidegger’s writings of the 1930s and early 1940s. This fourth political theory would have the merit of criticizing Nazism from the inside and not from the outside, as liberals and communists do.

Moreover, Dugin here dodges the question of the *Black Notebooks* on the pretext that they do not bring anything fundamentally new to the discussion that had not already been learned from the treatises of 1936-1940, except for some elements of criticism of Nazism. He silently passes over the explicit anti-Semitism in the *Black Notebooks* of 1939-1942. He is also silent on the sentence removed by the editor of *The History of Being*, Peter Trawny, concerning the so-called propensity of Jews to “planetary criminality,” which the latter admitted in 2014 to having removed under pressure from the rightful owners. In general, Dugin pays no attention to the manipulation of Heideggerian texts by Heidegger or his editors, such as the famous 1938 lecture on “The Age of World Pictures”

¹⁰⁸ Martin Heidegger, *Der Anfang der abendländischen Philosophie. Auslegung des Anaximander und Parmenides*, GA 35 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2012), 1; see Gaëtan Pegny, “Alexandre Douguine, un heideggerisme à la fois assumé et dissimulé,” *Des philosophes face à la Shoah, Revue d’Histoire de la Shoah* 207 (October 2017): 115-128, 122.

¹⁰⁹ Dugin, *Martin Heidegger. The Philosophy of Another Beginning*, 110-111.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, 31.

mentioned in the interview, which Sidonie Kellerer has shown to have been tampered with after 1945.

Millerman asked Dugin about the compatibility between Heidegger's anti-Christianity and Dugin's attachment to the Russian Orthodox Church. The latter answered that Friedrich Wilhelm von Hermann supported the thesis of compatibility between Lutheranism and Heideggerian thought. These are questions that Dugin claims to have developed himself in two works that have not yet been translated from Russian: *Martin Heidegger: The Possibility of Russian Philosophy*, rather precisely referenced by Millerman in his monograph, and *Martin Heidegger: The Last God*.

To the question of whether Dugin has not adapted Heidegger to his political vision, just as Rorty did in the service of an opposite political vision, the latter denies being on the right or the left. He positions himself as an anti-modernist whose anti-modernism has gone through two phases, the first apollonian and traditional—when he referred mainly to René Guénon and Julius Evola—and the second Dionysian, based on Heidegger and on the Schmittian conception of politics. From this point on, Dugin's argument hardens: since liberalism does not accept any position that opposes it, making liberalism, in his view, "totalitarian," war is imminent and will occur in the service of the "rebirth of Eurasia as an eschatological and spiritual event."¹¹¹

Of particular interest for today's discussion, which is less about the political than about the so-called "philosophical," is that neither Dugin nor Millerman want to pay attention to the texts of the aforementioned *Black Notebooks* corresponding to the years 1933-1934, in which Heidegger proclaims the end of philosophy and the substitution of metapolitics for metaphysics. These texts anticipate the *Letter on Humanism* of 1947 and Heidegger's interventions at Cerisy in 1955, where, once again, he affirms that philosophy has come to an end and that the thought of the future is no longer philosophy. This explicit rejection of philosophy, which we find also in Hannah Arendt's posthumous work, *The Life of the Mind*, is entirely concealed by Dugin and Millerman—and would contradict Millerman's efforts to consistently present Heidegger's political positions as "philosophical."

If we now turn our attention to Millerman's own positions, we notice in his book *Beginning by Heidegger*, which is based on his thesis and was published in 2020 by Arktos—publisher also of Pierre Krebs and Alain de Benoist—that his starting-point was theology and that it was through Dugin that he became interested in Heidegger.

Millerman is careful not to assume purely political views of his own. He takes refuge behind the Duginian thesis of a "homology between philosophy and politics." This allows him to deny that one disqualifies too quickly political positions that are supposed to conceal deep and hidden "philosophical" potentialities. Heidegger thus appears as the only one who knew how to interpret

¹¹¹ "Heideggerian and apocalyptic thinker: Alexander Dugin on Martin Heidegger," Interviewed by Michael Millerman, November 3, 2015, <http://4pt.su/en/content/heideggerian-and-apocalyptic-thinker>.

the *narod* or the *Volk* as *Dasein*. Or again, according to the formula by which Dugin summarizes all Heidegger, *Dasein existiert völkisch*.¹¹² We can thus see the radicality of the proposal: it is insofar as he is a *völkisch* thinker that Heidegger is received by Dugin—and after him by Millerman—as the most “philosophical” of the political theorists, the one who best perceived the determinations of existence, reduced not to a universal principle, such as that of the natural equality between human beings, but to the diversity of the modes of being of the *Dasein* of each people. All this remains rather trivial. It corresponds to the ontologization of an approach that can just as well be described in ethnic terms, according to the “ethnosociology” praised by Dugin, even if he maintains that *narod* is a more fundamental term than *ethnos*.

Millerman circles around the problem without succeeding in clarifying it. Thus he writes:

It might eventually make sense to subsume that sort of *völkisch* fundamental ontology under a general concept of fascism or racism. Initially, though, despite the cryptic character of Heidegger’s perspective, more is obscured than clarified by collapsing the Heideggerian Volk, and accordingly the Duginian *narod*, into generic fascism or Nazism, or anything like that, surface terminological similarities notwithstanding.¹¹³

Whatever Dugin’s and Millerman’s contortions, it is impossible for them to pretend that the term *völkisch* did not have, in the context of the 1930s, obvious anti-Semitic and racist connotations. It is true that Dugin raises the Russian *narod* to the level of a political myth and a form of worship. But this trait is characteristic of all the forms of “spiritual” National Socialism that can be found in the 1930s: with Heidegger, of course, but also with Eric Voegelin or Alfred Baeumler and all the national socialists or philo-Nazi authors who refused to stick to a purely organic notion of race. And it can be shown that these forms of spiritual Nazism are neither the least radical nor the least exalted.

It would be interesting to explore how Millerman managed to get a doctoral thesis on Dugin and Heidegger approved at a Canadian university despite the withdrawal of several supervisors, including the political scientist Rudolph Beiner. The author was able to dedicate his work not exclusively to Dugin, but to four very different interpreters of Heidegger: Leo Strauss, Richard Rorty, Jacques Derrida, and Alexander Dugin. His work may thus appear as a non-sectarian work, open to the greatest variety of authors in terms of politics and nationality. In reality, Strauss is seen as the one who, through his critique of Heideggerian historicism, prevented the formation of a right-wing Heideggerianism in the United States. Rorty and Derrida, for their part, are used as a foil for Dugin, who is portrayed as the only one who has managed to get to the heart of Heidegger’s “philosophy,” in contrast to the liberal and left-wing readings, which remain superficial.

¹¹² Alexander Dugin, “Alexander Dugin on Martin Heidegger,” interviewed by Michael Millerman, November 3, 2015, https://www.academia.edu/17674206/Alexander_Dugin_on_Martin_Heidegger_Interview.

¹¹³ Michael Millerman, “Alexander Dugin Heideggerianism,” *geopolitica.ru*, June 27, 2018, <https://www.geopolitika.ru/en/article/alexander-dugins-heideggerianism>.

For Millerman, as for Dugin, Heidegger is the one who knew how to think the *Volk als Dasein* and the existential plurality of peoples—the *pluriversum* of the political, according to Carl Schmitt's concept of the Political. Conceived as a major figure of philosophy, even if not as the philosopher *per se*, Heidegger acknowledged the end of philosophy with Nietzsche and founded a new beginning in thought, which made possible the formation of a corresponding new political theory, that of Dugin.

This presentation comes up against serious difficulties, basically the same as those already encountered with regard to Dugin, even if Millerman is less direct and is forced by the context in which he evolves to be much more equivocal than his Russian model. The first difficulty is Heidegger's fundamental Nazism, which becomes more and more difficult to conceal with the development of critical studies and the publication of increasingly damning writings. The second is the contradiction of considering as a major philosopher an author who proclaims the end of philosophy and considers philosophizing "the bad danger."

Hans Jonas knew enough—having attended Heidegger's lectures in Marburg in the 1920s with Leo Strauss, Karl Löwith, and Hannah Arendt, among others—to say that "it was not philosophy but a sectarian affair, almost a new belief." Today, authors such as the Italian phenomenologist Roberta de Monticelli are increasingly challenging Heidegger's claim to the very title of philosopher.¹¹⁴

Millerman attempts to bypass the first difficulty and apparently never becomes aware of the second. In the conclusion of his book, he devotes several pages to discussing my 2005 book as the one that has gone furthest in challenging Heidegger as a philosopher. However, Millerman refrains from confronting the question of his Nazism, probably knowing that he could not win the argument on ground that is now well documented. In this respect, we can observe that, just like Dugin, he jumps in his presentation of Heidegger from a quick consideration of *Being and Time* to a more detailed evocation of *Contributions to Philosophy* without stopping at the quite decisive courses and seminars given during the decade that separates the two works.¹¹⁵ It is thus on the conceptions of philosophy that Millerman brings the discussion.

This shift, in itself, does not fail to make sense. Since the publication of my book in 2005, I have always thought that sooner or later we would have to come to this point. Indeed, this occurred in the final discussion of *Confronting Heidegger* between Gregory Fried, Sidonie Kellerer, and

¹¹⁴ Roberta de Monticelli, *Towards a Phenomenological Axiology. Discovering what Matters* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021). In my opinion, it appears questionable to consider Heidegger a major philosopher less because he showed serious intellectual and moral failings than because of his assertions that philosophy had come to an end and metaphysics must give way to metapolitics. It is not a question of defending an overly idealized conception of philosophy, but of taking seriously the texts on metapolitics and the end of philosophy pertinently cited by Richard Wolin in his contribution to this volume.

¹¹⁵ Michael Millerman, *Beginning with Heidegger: Strauss, Rorty, Derrida, Dugin and the Philosophical Constitution of the Political* (London: Arktos, 2020), ch. 1.

myself.¹¹⁶ The problem one encounters with Millerman's conclusion is that he has separated—following Dugin's example, albeit less sharply—Heidegger's thought and National Socialism. Having done so, the terms of any succeeding debate are distorted. At the beginning of his conclusion, Millerman writes:

perhaps the greatest obstacle blocking access to Heidegger is the view that his philosophy is Nazism or at the very least abets it. While thralldom to certain themes in Heidegger can lend itself to uncritical sympathies for various elements of a Nazistic worldview, non-Nazi political zealotry concerning Heidegger can also lead to philosophical blindness or even to war against philosophical inquiry. Both risks must be avoided, and both the philosophical and the political must receive their due.¹¹⁷

And he goes on to say:

According to Emmanuel Faye, in Heidegger, philosophy becomes handmaiden to Nazism and is thereby discredited as philosophy. Indeed, Faye argues that Heidegger's Complete Works do not belong on philosophy shelves, but in the Nazi literature section of our libraries.¹¹⁸

According to this presentation, by a remarkably sophomoric twist, my “non-Nazi political zeal” prevents me from perceiving the philosophical background of Heideggerian thought. Moreover, since for Millerman, as for Dugin, Heidegger is positioned as the philosopher per se, this untimely zeal has led me to fight not Nazism in thought, but philosophical research itself!

Finally, let us note that I have never presented philosophy as having become, with Heidegger, the “servant of Nazism.” This expression, in fact, presupposes once again that he is the philosopher per se, who subsequently went astray by putting his philosophy at the service of his National Socialist commitment. The reading I propose is quite different, since I show, with Johannes Fritsche, that the equation of *Dasein* with the community of the people engaged in the choice of its hero and the pursuit of the struggle is not a late-arriving motif of the 1930s but a central proposition that has been present since *Being and Time* in the 1920s.

According to Millerman, in defending a humanistically minded philosophy, I have placed myself in a situation of competing claims between philosophies, in which no one side could pretend to conclude in its favor. This might be true if I were defending a particular, predefined conception of the human being in my 2005 book. But this is not the case, and the brief mention in my conclusions of my earlier research on the humanist philosophers of the Renaissance remains factual, without directly interfering with the critique of Heidegger developed throughout the book.

¹¹⁶ Gregory Fried. *Confronting Heidegger. A Critical Dialogue on Politics and Philosophy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019).

¹¹⁷ Millerman, *Beginning with Heidegger*, 214.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 215.

Basically, the problem with Heidegger—and Dugin insofar as he goes further on this point—is not that they would defend a particular conception of the human being, acceptable among many others, but that, by suppressing even the mention of the human being in order to retain only a plurality of *Dasein* assimilated to the non-“degenerate” (*entartete*) peoples, namely the Germans and the Russians, the very notion of humanity is dynamited and destroyed. Philosophy being intimately linked, since at least Socrates and Plato, to the questioning of what it is to be human, a *völkisch* and National Socialist worldview, which destroys the very possibility of forming a concept of *humanitas*, cannot properly be considered a philosophy.

That this worldview also leads to an apology for terror and the development of a genocidal mentality in politics is only too apparent in the authors discussed here. With Heidegger and Dugin we do not have, as Millerman would have us believe, a philosophy of abysmal depth, which alone can form a new political theory that surpasses existing political theories and prepare for another beginning, but a worldview that is identitarian and as such exclusionary. Dugin’s existential politics, his conception of the “existential city,” is discriminatory. The one who does not “philosophize” is expelled from the city. What he calls, following Heidegger, “philosophy” is in reality a selective principle. As for the latter, his *völkisch* background remains intimately linked to the fundamentals of the National Socialist movement, which he never ceased to praise.

Heidegger and his followers claimed to have revolutionized philosophy in the second half of the 20th century. But his legacy has been gradually challenged as further research has demonstrated how much his philosophy cannot be dissociated from his political engagement in support of Nazism. The publication beginning in 2014 (and still ongoing at the time this writing) of Heidegger's Black Notebooks, written between 1931 and 1970, has been the latest evidence of the intimate relationship between Heideggerian philosophy and Nazi ideology.

For a long time, the philosopher inspired far-right thinkers the world over, from Europe to Russia and even Iran. Heidegger's concept of Dasein posits national identity in a specifically primitivist racial-cultural Volkishness. In the context of Heidegger's writings after Hitler took power, it is clear that his pre-1933 definition of Dasein fit neatly into the ideology of the emerging Nazi state and particularly that of the primitivist ideology of the Sturmabteilung (SA), and the later Ahnenerbe. The incorporation of his ideas offers an easy cachet to far-right ideologies in search of a source of philosophical legitimacy.

The concept of Dasein can indeed be read as a straightforward legitimization of a Volkish ontology: it calls for rootedness and nativity, arguing that every worldview is justified through its being anchored by a local identity, thereby destroying any idea of universalism. Heidegger's language of the "end of philosophy" also fits an eschatological vision of the end of the Western world, a requiem for a dying world, and by a domino effect, the announcement of the rebirth of anti-Western civilizations. The Dasein concept can then be repurposed for many different contexts: with a white-supremacist narrative for those hoping for a rebirth of the white race after its having been killed off by Western liberalism; or in a Russian version as done by the infamous geopolitician Alexander Dugin.

Dugin discovered Heidegger partly late in his intellectual journey. For a long time, the Russian ideologist was focused on classic figures of pro-Nazi traditionalism such as Julius Evola, and on the whole ideological construction of Nazi esotericism, before realizing how much Heidegger could offer to his theories. After several works about Heidegger were published in Russian (and at least one translated into English), and several translations of Heidegger were published in Russian, Dugin adopted the Dasein concept in his Fourth Political Theory (2009), which, in a sense, is a tribute to Heidegger's engagement with a "spiritual" National Socialism.

In this volume, our contributors address how the Black Notebooks have dramatically reshuffled the deck of Heidegger studies (Richard Wolin), how Heidegger has been read in the Soviet-Russian context (Michail Maiatsky), and how Dugin has been reading Heidegger's philosophy, projecting his own interpretation back into the Western far-right world (Emmanuel Faye).

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